

Social Capital As A Factor Of Sustainable Development Of New Uzbekistan.

Norkuziyev Sodikjon Khakimovich

Namangan State University

Associate Professor, Candidate of Philosophy

E-mail: norkuziyevss@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The fact that the world we live in today aims to build a society based on human potential is, to some extent, bringing about changes in society by studying some aspects of social capital. Social capital is an indicator of the cultural level of society, an important tool in creating the basis of civil society. It develops by embodying moral standards, knowledge, skills and abilities of people. Currently, quality education, qualified medical care, stable functioning of the principles of justice and the rule of law, and the free functioning of social institutions are the main signs of a social state, developing social capital as one of the state models aimed at ensuring the strength of the social protection system, ensuring employment, creating safe working conditions, and reducing poverty.

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Социальный Капитал Как Фактор Устойчивого Развития Нового Узбекистана.

Норкузиев Содикджон Хакимович

Наманганский государственный университет

Доцент, кандидат философских наук

Электронная почта: norkuziyevss@gmail.com

Аннотация: Тот факт, что современный мир нацелен на построение общества, основанного на человеческом потенциале, в какой-то мере обуславливает изменения в обществе, изучая некоторые аспекты социального капитала. Социальный капитал является показателем культурного уровня общества, важным инструментом создания основ гражданского общества. Он развивается, воплощая в себе моральные нормы, знания, умения и навыки людей. В настоящее время качественное образование, квалифицированная медицинская помощь, стабильное функционирование принципов справедливости и верховенства права, беспрепятственное функционирование социальных институтов являются основными признаками социального государства, развивающего социальный капитал как одну из моделей государства, направленных на обеспечение прочности системы социальной защиты, обеспечение занятости, создание безопасных условий труда и сокращение бедности.

Ключевые слова: Государство всеобщего благосостояния, социальный капитал, совместное определение, экономическое благосостояние, гражданское общество, социальная защита, общественный контроль, СМИ.

Introduction. Today, the primary objective of any state is to build a social welfare state and improve the living standards of its citizens. In our country, increasing the significance and role of social capital makes it possible

to objectively assess economic growth rates, conduct an in-depth analysis of inflation, and develop scientific forecasts aimed at preventing potential future challenges. This approach also envisages enhancing the economic importance of small business and private entrepreneurship segments within the national economy. By analyzing various forms of social capital—particularly trust, social norms, values, and the influence of horizontal networks—it becomes possible to develop effective mechanisms of the social state.

From the first days of independence, the Republic of Uzbekistan set a number of key objectives. One of these was to advance “from a strong state to a strong civil society.” As we have witnessed, this goal has yielded tangible results within a relatively short period, and it is no coincidence that our aspirations continue to evolve today. Our continued progress “from a strong state to a strong civil society” is both deliberate and justified.

Modern societies today, above all, are characterized by transformations in values, which require citizens to assume an active civic position and a sense of civic responsibility. The formation of mechanisms of interaction between democratic institutions and democratic values contributes to the development of new knowledge and skills within society. Therefore, social capital not only serves as a factor ensuring transformations in the social life of society, but also occupies a worthy place in the state’s domestic and foreign policy, playing an important role in ensuring political stability.

Literature Review. Relevant fields of philosophical inquiry into social capital have been partially examined from political and sociological perspectives as an interdisciplinary area of research. Existing studies are reflected in the works of Western scholars such as L. J. Hanifan, P. Bourdieu, J. Coleman, V. L. Tammy, É. Durkheim, and F. Fukuyama.

Research aimed at identifying the role of the phenomenon of social capital in ensuring societal stability can be found in the works of S. Ponomar, S. Yegorova, A. Kiykov, A. Konkov, and O. Polyakova. The functions of social capital in fostering mutual solidarity among individuals have been examined by S. Veronica, E. Bondar, and B. Stolyarlar. The role of social capital and the social state in political development has been studied by scholars such as M. Melanin and M. Korniychuk.

In recent years, economists, sociologists, political scientists, and philosophers in our country have been actively researching the scientific and theoretical aspects of the concepts of “Human” and “Social Capital.” Among economists, Q. Abdurahmonov, J. Ataniyazov, T. Jalilov, D. Rahmonov, and B. Usmonov have carried out extensive research in this field. The sociological aspects of human capital and social capital have been investigated by M. Sodirjonov, X. Akramov, and E. Abdullayev. The philosophical and political dimensions of the role and significance of social capital in society, its modern mechanisms, and its impact on social development have been analyzed by M. Norqobilov, S. Saidov, and D. Ernazarov.

Research Methodology. The article employs research methods such as empirical research, logical reasoning, systematic analysis, analysis and synthesis, the principle of interrelatedness, and comparative analysis, based on fundamental principles of scientific inquiry.

Analysis and Results. Globalization processes are reflected not only in specific economic practices but also in traditional value systems at the micro-, macro-, and mega-levels of the social system, thereby influencing the formation of national identity. The analysis reveals that language, culture, and the economy—forming the core foundations of a state’s national distinctiveness—are subject to the most significant transformational changes. Therefore, particular attention should be paid to developing a system of measures aimed at the institutional regulation of globalization processes and the creation of protective mechanisms to preserve the most vulnerable elements of national identity.

In the course of our research, we also sought to examine the prospects for the development of social capital and contemporary trends within society in the context of the “family–mahalla–education–development” framework. Ensuring that New Uzbekistan becomes part of the community of developed democratic states with stable socio-economic growth and a high level of human capital constitutes the essence and substance of our sustainable development strategy [1].

In recent years, numerous reforms aimed at state development and improving the quality of social life have been implemented in our country. In particular, on April 30, 2023, a nationwide referendum was held to update the current Basic Law—the Constitution. From the very first article of the revised Constitution, it is evident that modern Uzbek society recognizes the need for social capital. According to this article, Uzbekistan is defined as a sovereign, democratic, legal, social, and secular state with a republican form of governance, which indicates that new transformations have been set as strategic objectives for our society. One of these objectives is the establishment of a social state. If a society is to be built on the principles of a social state, it must прежде

require social capital, as one of the foundational elements of the social state is constituted by the segments of social capital. As noted, “this is a state with clearly defined goals that operates by prioritizing the interests of society as a whole, encompassing its social structure, social groups, social institutions, and human social relations—in short, all spheres of social life” [11].

In Uzbekistan, the future directions of social capital in the process of building a social state are expressed through the following key aspects:

Providing support and assistance to socially vulnerable segments of the population;

Developing and encouraging the activities of charitable organizations;

Ensuring employment and creating new jobs;

Protecting motherhood, fatherhood, and childhood, as well as supporting and assisting the institution of the family;

Ensuring citizens receive decent wages and incomes;

Creating favorable conditions for free and high-quality education;

Improving the level of public healthcare and strengthening overall health.

All of the above contribute to fostering relations of solidarity within society, enhancing cooperation among social strata, implementing the principle of social justice, and encouraging active engagement based on diligence and patriotism. Strengthening social capital among the younger generation is not only crucial for their future lives but also enables them to adapt more rapidly to societal changes, develop resilience in diverse situations, maintain emotional well-being, and ultimately find their place in life.

A social state represents a model of governance aimed at providing quality education, qualified medical care, comprehensive support for families, children, women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities, ensuring housing for those in need, promoting employment, creating safe working conditions, and reducing poverty.

Protection against unemployment, guaranteed access to quality education, provision of qualified medical services, and comprehensive support for children, women, the elderly, persons with disabilities, migrants, and their family members remain among the state’s constant priorities. The allocation of a significant portion of the state budget to these areas serves as practical evidence of this commitment.

Conclusion. In conclusion, enhancing the opportunities available to young people is of crucial importance from the perspective of social capital, as it serves as a catalyst for ensuring collective well-being.

Since the 1970s, developed democratic states have placed significant emphasis on institutions of self-governance in defining their paths of development. Even today, within civil society, self-governing bodies play a vital role in analyzing the living conditions of populations in administrative-territorial units, addressing social disparities, encouraging the adoption of innovative ideas, closely examining events occurring within local communities, and enabling citizens to express objective and active civic positions.

According to researcher G. Malikova, “the mahalla has always struggled to survive like a living organism, constantly adapting to difficult conditions. For this reason, it has shaped the everyday lifestyle of the people, formed systems of social relations, moral norms, and rules, and, possessing deep historical roots, has organized and guided daily life. The mahalla represents a consistent moral system based on mutual assistance, hospitality, respect for elders, and the principle of equality among all members of society” [12].

At the new stage of Uzbekistan’s development, comprehensive transformation of society and its advancement through socio-cultural technologies have become key determinants of progress. In particular, as outlined in the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-5938 dated February 18, 2020, titled “*On Measures to Improve the Social and Moral Environment in Society, Further Support the Mahalla Institution, and Elevate the System of Work with Families and Women to a New Level*”, the introduction of an effective cooperation system based on the principle “mahalla – sector – public reception office – mahalla” was mandated. This initiative aims to ensure that the mahalla functions in practice as a reliable “bridge” between the state and the people, while implementing comprehensive measures to support families and women [13]. In addition, the “Targeted Measures Program” and the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-62 dated December 24, 2021, “*On Measures to Organize the Activities of the Agency for Mahalla-Based Work and Entrepreneurship Development under the Ministry of Economic Development and Poverty Reduction*”, were adopted.

“We have created the Uzbek model of poverty reduction by working at the lowest level—the mahalla,” President Shavkat Mirziyoyev stated in his address at the ninth annual meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank held in Samarkand.

It is widely acknowledged that the mahalla serves as a significant socio-cultural factor in the formation and development of social capital. Historically, families have sought to resolve the outcomes and challenges arising from their social relations first through the mahalla. By fostering social solidarity, cohesion, tolerance, friendship, closeness, and mutual support, the mahalla functions as an essential socio-cultural mechanism.

Special attention should be paid to the quality and evolution of social capital within mahallas in our society. For example, the long-standing tradition in Uzbek mahallas of leaving household gates unlocked reflects a high level of social trust. Being aware of ill neighbors and providing charity to those in need are also manifestations of social capital. Recalling the scene involving a locked gate in Abdulla Qahhor's short story "The Thief" or in the film "Suyunchi" further illustrates the strong presence of trust within Uzbek society [14].

The conducted research leads to the conclusion that as equality of opportunities declines, problems among young people—such as access to education, employment in their field of specialization, and fear of losing existing jobs—are becoming increasingly acute. Due to the imbalance between labor market demands and the specializations in which higher education institutions currently train graduates, challenges related to youth employment continue to intensify.

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