

## Spiritual and moral education

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**Abstract:** The development of every advanced nation and people is closely linked to the moral values of individuals. This article discusses the concept of spiritual and moral education as one of the essential aspects of personality formation. It explores methods of instilling spiritual values and criteria in the younger generation and outlines effective approaches to moral education within the family, school, and society.

**Keywords:** education and upbringing, spirituality, moral education, methods of moral and spiritual upbringing, ethics, importance of family education

In studying the theory of education, it is emphasized that the learning process should not only equip students with knowledge but also develop them into morally upright individuals. Education and upbringing are closely interconnected. Their unity lies primarily in their shared goals. In an integrated pedagogical process, the primary task of education is to ensure students acquire knowledge, while upbringing aims to form beliefs, moral skills, and aspirations that align with the moral standards of society. Spirituality reflects a person's inner world and its development level. Thus, spiritual and moral education is about nurturing personal actions, aspirations, and inner values that form the foundation of an individual's character. As Alisher Navoi said: "Enlighten the world with intellect, bring joy to the nation with manners." A person's essence is defined by their spirituality and behavior. Therefore, spirituality and ethics are often mentioned together. Spirituality helps individuals understand their purpose, and ethics guides their behavior towards achieving these goals. Moral and spiritual education teaches young people to set clear life goals and pursue them with noble behavior. In other words, spiritual education shapes the inner world of a student, while moral education connects this inner world to the external environment. The moral nature of a person depends not on their physical traits but on their inner spirituality. It is essential for teachers, mentors, and parents to understand this. In today's complex world, it is crucial for educators and parents to master educational methods and collaborate actively. Moral qualities become virtues only when they are instilled in children from a young age and turn into habits. Every parent and teacher must deeply understand how to instill these qualities and educate morally. The great scholar Ibn Sina emphasized that upbringing should begin not at birth, but even earlier—during the mother's pregnancy. Spiritual upbringing begins with treating a child as a human being. To achieve this, every parent and teacher should:

- Respect the rights and freedoms of the child;
- Set reasonable and fair expectations appropriate to the child's abilities;
- Understand the child's condition, even when they refuse to complete a task;
- Clearly convey the goals and objectives of upbringing;
- Avoid imposing virtues;
- Refrain from using humiliating punishments that harm the child's dignity.

They should study the methodology of moral education, analyze the state of upbringing in the family, school, and class, and possess competencies not only in pedagogical heritage but also in applying modern educational technologies. Educators need to acquire knowledge and skills in the following:

- Understanding the role of folk pedagogy, the pedagogical heritage of scholars, national traditions, and customs in organizing spiritual upbringing;

- Being aware of the conditions and ways to raise children in collaboration with the family, community, and society;

- Mastering the methodology of moral education during lessons and extracurricular activities;

- Assessing students' level of upbringing;

- Planning moral education considering students' individual traits, age, knowledge level, worldview, motivation, and mental state;

- Approaching every educational event seriously and positively, using effective methods and techniques;

- Continuously enriching their knowledge to enhance the effectiveness of moral education. After Uzbekistan gained independence, significant changes occurred in the content, essence, methods, and forms of education and upbringing. The formation and development of national values became a priority. Attention was drawn to history, culture, and traditions. Today, strengthening independence and advancing development depends on mature individuals. Shaping an individual's attitude toward society, raising awareness against harmful behaviors, instilling conscious discipline, and nurturing perfect human beings are the main tasks of moral education. Morality and manners form the basis of a person's relationship with society. Increasing students' respect for society helps foster moral awareness, self-realization, and belief in good people. Encouraging qualities like friendship, unity, cooperation, and mutual support in students during classes and extracurricular activities forms the foundation of national strength. Ancient philosophers and scholars highly valued ethics and wrote numerous books, stories, moral guides, and wise tales on this topic throughout history.

Just as a young sapling needs care to grow into a strong tree, a child needs proper upbringing. The family is the first school of a child. The parents' spiritual and emotional behavior, exemplary conduct, upbringing, experience, dedication, sensitivity, and discipline serve as a mirror for children from an early age. Each family

should follow important rules in raising children to ensure effective upbringing. Parents must collaborate with preschool institutions, schools, and the community, treat all children equally, be fair, and consider the child's age and development features. Another condition for proper moral upbringing in the family is unity. Parents and elders should act together in communication, encouragement, punishment, and influence. When one parent allows something and another forbids it, or one punishes while the other negates it, this inconsistency negatively affects the child's upbringing. Children who notice such gaps may become deceitful, disrupting their path to becoming complete individuals. The ultimate goal should be to raise the younger generation in the spirit of national values, good customs, and family traditions. Even in Islamic teachings, it is stated that raising one's own children well is a personal obligation for a father, and raising orphans in the community is a communal obligation. Poetic quote: "The comfort of the soul in this world is upbringing, And in the Hereafter, it leads to eternal peace. Upbringing accompanies the soul to paradise—Indeed, it is no mistake to call it the key to Heaven. Oh fathers, take care of your beloved children; Strive hard, do not waste the time of upbringing".

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