



ADVANCED VIEWS OF TURKESTAN REFORMERS ON THE MODERNIZATION OF THE EDUCATION AND UPBRINGING SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the ideas of Turkestan reformers concerning the modernization of social life through the development of education and upbringing, their efforts to awaken national consciousness, establish new-method schools, and reform the content of education, as well as their views on women's education and upbringing, its goals and main directions, and their initiatives to ensure equality between boys and girls in education. The article is presented to the scholarly pedagogical community as a source of information on the pedagogical and socio-political activities of the reformist Jadids, as well as the ideas and approaches they advanced.

The reformers of Turkestan carried out their activities on the basis of the idea of enlightening the people through education. They were also widely recognized as the “Jadid enlighteners.” In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, a movement of intellectuals emerged in Turkestan with the aim of reforming education, schools, and society. Their principal goal was to ensure the progress of the nation; therefore, the Jadid enlighteners saw national development in modern education, moral upbringing, and social awakening.

The main foundations of the pedagogical views of the reformers were as follows:

1. The establishment of “new-method” schools and the modernization of the existing education system.

The Jadids promoted *usuli jadid* pedagogical ideas, including ensuring students' phonetic literacy, planning and organizing lessons systematically, developing the class-lesson system in terms of both content and methodology, assessing students' knowledge, and relying on textbooks in the educational process. While not rejecting religious education, the Jadids emphasized the importance of including secular subjects in the curriculum, particularly natural sciences, geography, history, and arithmetic.

2. The interpretation of upbringing as a national and social responsibility.

In Jadid pedagogy, upbringing was regarded not merely as the responsibility of the family or the school, but as a matter of national importance. In particular, Abdulla Avloniy repeatedly stressed that upbringing had decisive significance for the destiny of the nation.

3. The formation of national identity through education.

The Jadids believed that it was possible to cultivate national self-awareness in children by ensuring that they developed a deep knowledge of their mother tongue and mastered their culture and history. They recognized that literacy in the native language, the development of national literature, the assimilation of customs and traditions, and the restoration of historical memory were the primary sources for fostering national pride and a sense of citizenship among the younger generation. For this reason, they recommended using textbooks, the press, literature, and theater as important pedagogical tools of upbringing.

4. The priority of the idea that “the teacher is a moral leader.”

In the pedagogical views of the Jadid enlighteners, the teacher was regarded not only as a transmitter of knowledge, but also as a leader who understands the child’s inner world, serves as a model through speech and conduct, and spreads enlightenment within society.

5. Advocacy of mass enlightenment of the people. The reformers of Turkestan supported the idea of educating the entire population. To this end, they recommended making use of the opportunities provided by the press, theater, and the wider public. In educational work, they did not confine themselves to the classroom, but advanced the idea of educating all members of society. The articles and pamphlets they wrote, the stage works they created, as well as the meetings and roundtable discussions they organized, were all characterized by their aim of educating our people, broadening their knowledge, and raising their consciousness.

The Jadids made a worthy contribution to the theory and methodology of national upbringing and the formation of a sense of identity. First, they paid special attention to developing the younger generation’s culture of speaking in the mother tongue and their linguistic literacy, and, to this end, to creating a new generation of textbooks, thereby fostering the development of national thinking among young people. For example, Munavvarqori Abdurashidxonov’s textbook *Adibi Avval*, prepared for new-method schools, successfully contributed to improving the literacy of primary school students, enriching their knowledge, and enhancing the content of instructional materials for this purpose.

Second, the Jadid enlighteners gave priority to spiritual and moral upbringing in education. They attached particular importance to cultivating personal responsibility, morality, purity of heart, discipline, and patriotism. For example, in his work *Turkiy Guliston yoxud Axloq*, Abdulla Avloniy discussed the formation of moral qualities in children, the main manifestations of these qualities, family conditions, their influence on personal development, factors related to one’s social environment, and educational traditions.

Third, the Jadids were among the principal advocates of critical thinking, the struggle against ignorance, and the development of civic consciousness. For instance, Mahmudxo’ja Behbudiy’s work *Padarkush* or the fate of an uneducated child has particular pedagogical significance as a work that demonstrates the social tragedy of ignorance and encourages the younger generation to pursue education.

Fourth, the Jadids called for the unity of the peoples of the Turkic world and became promoters and advocates of the idea of a common Turkic cultural space. It is emphasized that Ismail Gasprinsky’s slogan, “Unity in language, thought, and action,” strengthened the atmosphere of educational awakening among Turkic peoples.

Fifth, the Jadids paid special attention to girls and family upbringing. They sought to broaden the social foundations of education and upbringing. According to the Jadids, women were interpreted as transmitters of enlightenment, while mothers were regarded as educators. Particular attention was also given to the development of family culture. Even today, these ideas provide a foundation for organizing family-school-mahalla education as a unified chain.

The Jadids' ideas, which are consistent with the competency-based approach—namely, the acquisition of practical knowledge, the alignment of morality with the needs of society, and the assimilation of behavioral norms necessary for life—correspond closely to contemporary goals such as functional literacy, the development of critical thinking, the formation of media and information culture, and the cultivation of civic competence. While preserving national values, the Jadids called for openness to science and knowledge. Today, this idea has evolved into a principle of integrating the content of education and upbringing with global competencies, STEM, the thorough study of foreign languages alongside the mother tongue, and the achievement of digital literacy.

The development of teachers' speech culture, humanism, and responsibility before the public are among the ideas advanced by the Jadids and passed down to us as a legacy. For today's educator, professional ethics, educational leadership, and cooperation with parents and the mahalla are of particular importance. The Jadid enlighteners put forward these ideas more than a century ago. The Jadids did not limit upbringing to the school and the family; rather, they popularized it through the press, culture, and the community. Today, these views call for implementation through cooperation among the "school-family-mahalla" and other social institutions, as well as through clubs, extracurricular circles, project-based activities, theatrical performances, debates, and media projects.

In an extremely difficult historical period, the Jadid enlighteners paid particular attention to the education and upbringing of women. The Jadids regarded women's education as one of the key factors in national progress. In their writings, they repeatedly emphasized that if women were not literate and enlightened, child upbringing within the family would weaken, the spiritual and moral climate of society would deteriorate, and the cultural and economic development of the nation would slow down. They advanced the idea that particular attention should be paid to women's education in the following areas.

A small publication note: for an international conference, I am keeping names and titles in a scholarly transliteration-friendly form while making the English sound natural and academic. Send the next section, and I will continue in exactly the same style.

1. Developing women's functional literacy and organizing family upbringing on the basis of a gender-sensitive approach. The Jadids analyzed the low level of literacy among women and regarded one of its principal causes as the fact that women often received instruction from otinoyis who lacked specialized pedagogical training. Such instruction was typically conducted spontaneously, without reliance on any curriculum, textbooks, or methodological guidelines. At the core of this view lay the idea that "the mother is the first educator." The Jadid enlighteners believed that if the mother was educated, both child upbringing and family culture would be elevated.

2. The harmony of national upbringing and modern knowledge.

The Jadids understood with great insight that national upbringing required harmony with modern knowledge. In educating women, they considered it essential to teach literacy in the mother tongue, ethics and manners, cleanliness, diligence, and secular subjects such as history, geography, and arithmetic. In their view, a woman should not be limited to household responsibilities alone, but should become a conscious individual capable of understanding social life, and this principle, they argued, should become a priority in society.

3. Promoting healthy public awareness of women's dignity, duties, and rights. The Jadid enlighteners sought to cultivate sound public understanding of women's dignity, as well as their duties and rights. Through their articles in the press, public lectures, and debates, the Jadids brought the issue of women's education and upbringing into public discussion. For example, articles about Mahmudxo'ja Behbudiy highlight that he raised issues related to women's rights, education, and social condition in Turkestan society.

4. Transforming theater and literature into important means of women's education and upbringing. One of the Jadids' valuable ideas was to turn theater and literature into effective instruments for the education and upbringing of women. Through stage works, plays, dramas, stories, and articles, the Jadid enlighteners criticized outdated social attitudes, superstition, and harmful innovations, revealed the fate of women, and called society toward enlightenment.

The Jadids' ideas concerning the education and upbringing of women and their formation as active members of society encountered very serious obstacles at that time. Attracting girls to school, preventing their early marriage, and overcoming the conditions that confined them to household obligations posed severe challenges for the Jadid enlighteners. Under extremely difficult social circumstances, the Jadids showed exceptional dedication to educating women, creating conditions for them to develop as active representatives of the nation, and ensuring that, as in developed countries, they could receive education equal to that of men. Regrettably, many of the women who set out to study abroad fell victim to ignorance. New methods of education, textbooks, secular subjects, and the inclusion of girls in general education were often perceived as actions "contrary to tradition." The lack of separate classes and schools for girls, a safe learning environment, and, above all, female teachers, was also one of the major problems of that period. Thus, women's education at that time faced both institutional and social barriers. Poverty, the cost of books and notebooks, and the involvement of children in domestic labor hindered their access to continuous education. For this reason, the Jadid enlighteners opened schools and published textbooks at their own expense.

The contradictions, pressures, and sharp transformations of the early twentieth century, as well as the differing attitudes toward the spiritual and educational movement, further complicated the implementation of Jadid ideas. The concepts and approaches advanced by the Jadids in the fields of schooling, public education, teaching, and upbringing are of strategic importance for the present-day education system of Uzbekistan. Studying these ideas and providing them with sound scholarly substantiation is one of the important tasks facing the scientific and pedagogical community today.

Women's education is one of the most effective factors in improving the quality of upbringing of future generations. The Jadid enlighteners repeatedly addressed this issue and regarded it as a global concern of both the state and society. Today, the strategic objectives advanced by the Jadids are being reflected at the level of state policy in Uzbekistan, and the state is continuously supporting women's access to education and their development as active members of society. Uzbek girls now have opportunities equal to those of boys to study abroad. There are also broad opportunities for Uzbek women in master's degree programs and in post-higher education pathways.

Girls' education is enhancing the scientific, cultural, social, and economic potential of Uzbek society through professional development, participation in the labor market, entrepreneurship, and social activism. Therefore, the Jadids' ideas remain highly relevant to contemporary educational policy and correspond closely to the concept of human capital. Education is strengthening women's legal awareness, communication culture, and equality and responsibility in family relations. Likewise, the Jadids also sought to transform women's social consciousness through the press and enlightenment.

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