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THE NATIONAL-IDEOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF SPIRITUAL SECURITY IN ACHIEVING ECONOMIC STABILITY

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the dual nature of human beings: inherently seeking meaning and love while also being ready to fulfill any task for economic benefit. The philosopher Diotima, a follower of Plato's ideas, argues that in the process of understanding existence, rational economic man dominates human thinking. As a result, society has fostered the emergence of the concept of Homo economicus, or the "economic man". Today, the increasing prevalence of such individuals worldwide has led to numerous global issues and sparked discussions regarding spiritual security.

KEYWORDS: *Macroeconomic stability, economy and business, morality, ethics, etiquette, aesthetics, humanism, responsibility, patriotism, innovative ethical ideas.*

In the contemporary economic and business landscape, sustainable and comprehensive development necessitates a strong moral foundation, encompassing ethics, decorum, aesthetics, humanism, responsibility, patriotism, and other related values. Spirituality, as an intrinsic experience of profound interconnectedness with all living beings, transcends the pressures of market forces and conventional business regulations, aiming instead at long-term objectives. The realization of these objectives necessitates the formulation and practical application of innovative ethical paradigms. Regrettably, spirituality has not yet assumed a central role in the economic domain. Instrumental and utilitarian rationality continues to dominate the realms of business and economics. However, should economic and business activities integrate spiritual values as a core principle, they could attain economic stability, undergo continuous renewal, and evolve into advanced social institutions. Global experience has consistently demonstrated that a prosperous and economically stable state is inextricably linked to the enrichment of its moral and ethical values. As noted in contemporary discourse, "In a rapidly changing world, where new threats and challenges undermine stability and sustainable development, prioritizing spiritual and moral education, fostering ethical awareness, and encouraging youth in their pursuit of knowledge and self-improvement is more crucial than ever [1]".

Scholarly research indicates that as individuals increasingly prioritize material goals, they tend to allocate less attention to spiritual aspirations. While core moral values have the potential to mitigate societal challenges, strengthen humanistic principles, and foster compassion, empirical findings suggest that individuals who excessively prioritize material wealth experience lower levels of personal spiritual well-being. Moreover, such individuals often exhibit diminished resilience, reduced competitiveness, and a lower inclination toward active civic engagement.

In recent years, Uzbekistan has undertaken significant initiatives to enhance both the spiritual development of its citizens and the economic stability of the state. Notably, the adoption of Presidential Decree PF-60, issued by President Shavkat Mirziyoyev on January 28, 2022, concerning the "Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022–2026" [2], reflects a comprehensive analysis of global challenges and Uzbekistan's developmental trajectory. This strategic framework, grounded in the principle of "Human Dignity First", aims to enhance public welfare, transform economic sectors, accelerate entrepreneurial growth, safeguard human rights, and foster an active civil society.

A key objective outlined in the strategy's 21st goal focuses on ensuring sustained high economic growth rates across industries. Over the next five years, the plan seeks to increase per capita gross domestic product (GDP) by 1.6 times and, by 2030, elevate per capita income beyond $4,000 USD, thereby positioning Uzbekistan among "upper-middle-income countries". This ambition underscores the interdependence of economic progress and ethical advancement, reinforcing the notion that a nation's sustainable development hinges on the cultivation of a robust moral foundation.

To achieve this goal, ensuring economic stability is of paramount importance. Attaining economic stability is a fundamental objective for every nation, as it not only enhances public welfare but also significantly contributes to the overall development of the country. The realization of economic stability necessitates the fulfillment of several key factors, which play a crucial role in fostering sustainable growth. These factors include:

Economic Growth. A country's economic growth is achieved through job creation, increased household income, and the strengthening of the state budget. According to data provided by the World Bank in June 2024, the GDP growth rate in 2023

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and 2024 stood at 5.5% [3]. Overall, this indicator is expected to remain stable in 2025.

Inflation Control. High inflation reduces the purchasing power of the population and disrupts economic stability. For markets to function efficiently and continuously, and for the government to effectively utilize economic policy instruments, one crucial requirement must be met—the elimination of excessive inflation. Inflation is the process of declining purchasing power of the national currency, primarily reflected in the general increase in price levels. Amid the ongoing economic crisis, inflation is rising in several countries. For example, in May 2022, Uzbekistan's annual inflation rate reached 11%. According to the Central Bank of Uzbekistan, in November 2024, the monthly inflation rate stood at 0.9%, while the annual rate was recorded at 10%, compared to the same period of the previous year [4]. The significance of inflation growth is directly linked to the potential damage it may cause. The negative effects of inflation manifest in the following situations:

- The intensification of inflation adversely affects individuals with fixed incomes (i.e., those whose earnings are reviewed only periodically), including most wage earners, social benefit recipients, pensioners, and students. Their fixed incomes continuously depreciate due to rising prices.
- It reduces incentives for engaging in production activities and making investments. Engaging in production, especially in long-term investment projects, becomes entirely unprofitable, as capital turnover in production is slow, leading to a loss in purchasing power.
- It disrupts the normal functioning of financial markets. Determining appropriate interest rates for lending and borrowing, as well as estimating the profitability of securities, becomes highly dependent on expected inflation rates. However, predicting inflation with precision is nearly impossible. As a result, both lenders and borrowers may suffer financial losses.

Currency Stability. A stable exchange rate enhances a country's international trade and investment climate. Analytical data suggest that although Uzbekistan's financial market is not deeply integrated into global financial markets, fluctuations in the dollar index—reflected through exchange rate movements of major trading partner countries—impact the national currency, the Uzbek soum, with a certain lag. The depreciation of the national currency significantly influences domestic price formation. According to calculations by the Central Bank, a 1% depreciation in the soum's exchange rate accelerates the annual inflation rate by an average of 0.2 percentage points [5]. Consequently, this exacerbates the negative effects associated with inflation.

Social Justice. Ensuring the well-being of its citizens is one of the fundamental responsibilities of any state. Creating equal opportunities for all citizens positively influences economic stability. In the newly revised Constitution of Uzbekistan, the country has been explicitly recognized as a social state, which is a crucial factor for sustainable development. A social state is a governance model (or a well-organized network of social institutions) that safeguards and promotes the economic and social well-being of its citizens. It is based on principles of equal opportunities, fair distribution of wealth, and state responsibility for individuals lacking basic living conditions. The constitutional enshrinement of the national goal—"Let us live freely and prosperously in New Uzbekistan!"—emphasizes the necessity of establishing stable economic conditions and ensuring sustained economic growth to enhance public welfare. In turn, improving citizens' well-being contributes to the sustainable development of the national economy [6].

Skilled Workforce Development. A skilled workforce plays a critical role in economic growth, necessitating systematic regulation of labor market dynamics. The labor market represents the complex, multidimensional, and evolving socio-economic system that governs interactions between employable individuals (both employed and unemployed) and employers through contractual agreements based on personal interests, thereby regulating supply and demand for labor [7]. Ensuring an adequately skilled workforce requires the proper structuring of the education system. Educational processes must be directly aligned with modern knowledge, practical skills, and close integration with industrial production.

Innovation. In today's world, it is nearly impossible to envision progress without innovation. The implementation of innovations across all sectors determines the future prospects of those industries. Advanced technologies and innovations enhance production efficiency and accelerate economic growth, ultimately fostering a stable economy. The driving force behind this transformation lies in scientific advancements, the rapid adoption of cutting-edge technologies, and effective management practices. Consequently, interactions and relationships associated with the exchange and implementation of innovations among economic entities are becoming increasingly prominent.

Innovation refers to the introduction of novel processes and products aimed at enhancing qualitative growth and efficiency in response to market demand. It represents the ultimate outcome of human intellectual activity, creativity, discoveries, inventions, and rationalization efforts [8]. Although economic development is largely driven by innovation, the relatively slow pace of innovation in the past century has hindered its full implementation. However, in the post-industrial era, rapid economic development has acquired new characteristics: innovation has become an essential prerequisite for progress, a leading factor in production, and the speed of change has increased significantly. Consequently, innovation is emerging as a core activity and a crucial component of corporate strategic development.

The realization of economic stability requires the active involvement of various contributing factors, among which spiritual security is gaining increasing importance. In an era where ideological battlegrounds take precedence over nuclear conflicts, and the struggle for human consciousness and values intensifies, the necessity of ensuring spiritual security has become even more pressing.

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Spiritual security can be understood as an individual's self-confidence, self-awareness, the resilience of moral values and ideals, psychological stability, and a clear sense of belonging in society. According to Dr. Q.Nazarov, a distinguished philosopher and professor, the term "spiritual security" refers to a system designed to protect individuals, nations, and society from ideological threats and spiritual intrusions. As an integral part of national security, spiritual security is a continuous process aimed at safeguarding national interests, ensuring the stability of ideological and psychological life, and protecting spiritual values from external threats [9].

The national-ideological dimensions of spiritual security are critical for ensuring economic stability in Uzbekistan. These dimensions include: self-awareness and self-confidence; strength of moral values; psychological stability; social integration and self-actualization; moral education; resilience against external influences; optimism and trust in the future.

Self-Awareness. Every phenomenon, whether material or spiritual, arises due to specific determinants. In this context, historical consciousness and worldview are also shaped by defining factors. When analyzing self-awareness, it is crucial to consider needs and interests. Self-awareness is the ability to distinguish oneself from the external world, to recognize personal worth, and to perceive oneself as an integral part of a shared linguistic, cultural, and national identity.

Uzbekistan's First President, I. Karimov, emphasized the significance of historical consciousness in shaping national self-awareness: *"By self-awareness, I mean restoring historical memory, understanding our ancestry, recognizing our heritage, and, based on this realization, building a society that aligns with our unique identity".*

The ancient Greek philosopher Socrates further articulated the significance of self-awareness: *"A self-aware person understands what is beneficial and what they are capable of. By engaging in activities that align with their abilities, they fulfill their needs and achieve prosperity. This self-awareness prevents mistakes and misfortunes, enabling them to appreciate others and collaborate for the greater good."* [11]

Based on research and scholarly analysis, self-awareness can be classified into three levels:

1. **Personal self-awareness** – An individual's confidence in their abilities, values, and actions, enabling resilience, goal achievement, and self-discipline.
2. **National self-awareness** – A complex concept encompassing one's sense of national identity, cultural heritage, historical consciousness, and values. When unstructured, it may lead to historical skepticism, admiration of foreign leadership, or marginalization of national heritage.
3. **Universal self-awareness** – A broad recognition of one's existence, interconnection with humanity, and responsibility towards global issues.

Universal Self-Awareness Develops Through

- **Love for humanity** – Recognizing oneself as part of a global community, showing concern for others' well-being.
- **Understanding human values** – Embracing concepts such as truth, justice, compassion, and mutual respect.
- **Acknowledging cultural diversity** – Appreciating the richness of different cultures and traditions.
- **Awareness of global challenges** – Recognizing issues such as climate change, poverty, and terrorism that require collective action.
- **Assuming responsibility for humanity** – Understanding the impact of one's actions on a global scale.

The Formation of Self-Awareness

Eastern and Western scholars have extensively studied self-awareness. Prominent Eastern thinkers such as Imam Bukhari, Imam Termizi, Al-Farabi, Ibn Sina, and Alisher Navoi emphasized the spiritual and philosophical aspects of self-awareness. Conversely, Western philosophers such as Socrates, Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, René Descartes, Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, Erik Erikson, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Immanuel Kant, and Nikolai Berdyaev analyzed its social and psychological dimensions.

Developing self-awareness requires the following stages

- **Childhood experiences** – Family, education, friendships, and societal influences shape a person's self-perception.
- **Self-reflection** – Understanding one's strengths, interests, and purpose, while taking responsibility for actions.
- **Successes and failures** – Life experiences help build resilience and enhance self-awareness.
- **Creative engagement** – Exploring new knowledge and engaging in creative activities boost self-confidence.
- **Social environment** – A supportive society plays a crucial role in fostering self-awareness.

In conclusion, during economic development, ensuring an individual's spiritual security requires attention to the following key factors:

1. **Strength of moral values** – Spiritual values contribute to personal and social development. However, in the era of global market economies, these values are at risk as material wealth takes precedence.
2. **Psychological stability** – In today's ideological struggles, maintaining psychological resilience is essential for preserving authentic identity.
3. **Social integration** – Individuals must develop a strong sense of belonging to their society.
4. **Moral education** – A structured system for fostering moral principles and ethics.
5. **Resistance to external influences** – Strengthening ideological immunity to counter propaganda and harmful ideologies.
6. **Trust in the future** – Public optimism and confidence in national stability reinforce spiritual security.

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A nationwide survey conducted by the "Ijtimoiy Fikr" Center for Public Opinion Research in 2016 revealed that 97.5% of respondents regarded Uzbekistan's socio-economic situation as "good and stable," demonstrating high levels of public trust in the country's future [12]. By reinforcing spiritual security alongside economic development, Uzbekistan can ensure a balanced, sustainable, and progressive society.

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