

The Philosophical Content of the Concept of Poverty Reduction' and its Effectiveness in Building a Social State

Urinov Murodjon Jumanovich

Researcher of Fergana state university

Abstract: This article analyzes the philosophical content of the concept of “poverty reduction,” its socio-legal interpretations, as well as its role and significance in the process of building a social state. The theoretical foundations of approaches aimed at reducing poverty, and their connection with human needs, social justice, equal opportunities, and well-being are examined from a philosophical perspective. The article studies the effectiveness of poverty reduction mechanisms in strengthening the concept of a social state in modern society, as well as their relationship with government policy, civil society, and economic reforms. In addition, the role of poverty reduction strategies in ensuring sustainable development and social stability is highlighted.

Key words: poverty, social state, philosophy, social justice, equal opportunities, well-being, sustainable development.

Introduction

In the Presidential Decree of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-143 of 23 September 2024, “*On taking measures to a new stage in reducing poverty and improving the well-being of the population,*” the concept of poverty reduction is defined as follows: “*Poverty reduction means analysing the dynamics and structure of poverty, organizing the development of individual plans for bringing families out of poverty and coordinating their implementation, studying the activities carried out to lift the population out of poverty through on-site monitoring, and submitting monthly reports on the implementation of the ‘From Poverty to Prosperity’ programme to the Republican Commission.*”

Efforts aimed at reducing poverty are among the global challenges faced by all countries today. International experience shows that economic growth, a modern education system, and well-organized healthcare services play a crucial role in combating poverty. The main directions of policy aimed at poverty reduction include: measures directed toward economic development, which prioritize the creation of jobs and increasing employment through the expansion of economic sectors; improving the healthcare system to ensure access to high-quality medical services; reforms in the education sector to increase opportunities for obtaining sufficient education and raising the population’s level of knowledge; and strengthening institutions of self-governance by introducing community-based mechanisms to address existing problems in neighbourhoods and rural areas.

Literature review and methods

Factors influencing poverty and destitution, the elimination of challenges associated with reducing poverty, the dynamics of the civilizational transformation of poverty, as well as the impact of poverty and destitution on the socio-economic life of society and defining poverty thresholds, have been the focus of research conducted by numerous scholars. These include the works of J. Keynes, A. Marshall, D. Ricardo, A. Sen, M. Kremer, A. Banerjee, E. Duflo, G. Y. Anderson, D. Sachs, B. S. Rowntree, A. S. Deaton, D. Acemoglu & J. Robinson, A. P. Aleksandrov, A. V. Karev, Y. Y. Rumyantseva, A. A. Razumov, O. S. Abramova, L. M. Khusnutdinova, Y. G. Odegov, A. V. Vakhabov, B. Kh. Umrzaqov, and L. N. Ovcharova.

Results and discussion

In the 21st century, the acceleration of globalization processes and increasing competition on a global scale have intensified contradictions between economic and political systems. When states fail to provide sufficient conditions for the well-being of their citizens, their socio-economic situation deteriorates and social tensions in the environment increase. Consequently, the need for social states within global networks has grown even stronger. At this stage, the primary focus is placed on governance mechanisms grounded in social justice.

Over time, the development of concepts of the social state has integrated two major priorities: protecting and supporting citizens' rights and freedoms, and strengthening cooperative relations within society by ensuring justice in social interactions. Thus, the process of poverty reduction has become an essential component of the global agenda that defines the socio-political dynamics of modern societies.

From a historical perspective, poverty is a powerful force that has deeply influenced the development and growth of nations. As civilizations advance, communication among members of society expands, and broader external relations emerge. However, these interactions may also generate conditions that hinder the resolution of poverty-related issues. In many cases, ineffective local legislation in addressing economic challenges leads to the intensification of socio-political tensions.

Moreover, poverty occupies an important place in almost all aspects of contemporary ethical thinking. The process of refining moral norms reflects widely accepted concepts of legal justice and social respect among individuals. Institutions responsible for protecting the interests of citizens facing economic difficulties are also shaped accordingly. Sociological data show that while poverty in some societies is perceived as a relatively accepted reality, in others it is an extremely acute issue that provokes civil resistance and even large-scale unrest.

In the modern era, poverty should not be interpreted exclusively through economic indicators. Research must be conducted in accordance with the social events that have emerged and evolved across different stages of human development. Only through such an approach can the real causes of economic challenges within a society be identified and effective solutions devised.

In addressing this issue, methodological approaches play a crucial role. To ensure a comprehensive analysis, the following methods should be employed:

- Economic–statistical analysis: By examining average household incomes, consumption expenditure, and trade volume in individual countries, the level of poverty can be measured. Furthermore, analysing the financial infrastructure and tax systems of states makes it possible to assess opportunities for lifting people out of poverty.
- Sociological research: Conducting sociological studies is essential for analysing how poverty is distributed within society. Such research helps identify the causes of poverty in local communities and examine disparities between social groups.

Poverty, therefore, has historically constituted an integral part of human civilization and has been firmly embedded in the processes of societal development. Throughout the course of historical evolution, the concept of poverty has continuously transformed, acquiring new meanings and dimensions. Across various periods and regions of world history, poverty has assumed distinct features shaped by specific cultural and historical conditions. To analyse this scientific topic comprehensively, it is necessary to examine historical data on poverty from earlier periods.

Over time, poverty has developed new attributes. Although certain social groups in ancient societies lived under unfavourable conditions, they managed to sustain themselves through agricultural labour and manual work. During the Middle Ages, poverty became closely intertwined with ideological norms and religious-moral values that dominated social relations. Gradually, poverty began to influence the

broader social structure. While earlier it may not have significantly affected certain local communities, subsequent interactions with other social groups generated changes that substantially impacted society.

The functioning of state governance systems and the existence of social norms also play an important role in determining the level of poverty. For instance, China has dramatically reduced poverty over the past decade through the implementation of effective economic development strategies. Similarly, in the United States, established systems of financial support contribute to improving the economic conditions of the population. It should be emphasized that poverty, as a social phenomenon, develops in conjunction with other factors and continues to evolve. As social and cultural relations transform over time and new forces emerge in society, poverty also undergoes further changes in parallel with societal development.

In many national economies around the world, slowing GDP growth, declining real incomes, deepening social stratification, and increasing levels of poverty are being observed. According to World Bank data, 736 million people (10% of the global population) currently live in extreme poverty, surviving on less than USD 1.90 per day; nearly half of the world's population—3.4 billion people—live on less than USD 5.50 per day. Africa remains the region with the highest poverty levels; among the poorest countries are the Democratic Republic of Congo (extreme poverty rate of 77.1%) and Madagascar (77.6%).

In Uzbekistan, poverty and destitution were long treated as a “closed topic,” and concepts such as “low-income households,” “socially vulnerable groups,” and “improving the welfare of the population” were used instead. *“The causes of poverty vary and may be grouped as follows: (a) economic (unemployment, low wages, low labour productivity, poor competitiveness of the national economy or the specific sector in which the individual works); (b) socio-medical (disability, old age, high levels of illness); (c) demographic (single-parent families, a large number of dependents in a household); (d) socio-economic (low level of social protection guarantees); (e) educational and professional (low educational attainment, insufficient professional skills); (f) political (military conflicts, forced migration); (g) regional-geographical (uneven development of regions).”*

The issue of the minimum subsistence level was not addressed at all. The minimum subsistence level represents the monetary value of a consumer basket that includes essential food and non-food products, services, and mandatory payments required to maintain an individual's health and vital activity. In other words, the minimum subsistence level reflects the threshold below which a person cannot meet their basic needs and which marks the boundary between poverty and extreme poverty. This lack of attention to the issue has resulted in inadequate responses to existing challenges and negatively affected the living standards of the population.

CONCLUSION

Certain aspects of international experience can be adapted to Uzbekistan's national conditions as well. In this context, reviewing the primary approaches used by foreign countries to assess poverty and examining their applicability to local realities is crucial.

It should be noted that the regions of Uzbekistan differ considerably in their socio-economic development. Therefore, regional characteristics must be taken into account when assessing poverty levels. By analysing regional disparities, it becomes possible to design and implement targeted measures tailored to the specific needs of each area. This approach will ensure more effective policy outcomes and contribute to a well-grounded strategy for poverty reduction in the country.

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