

New-Method Schools of the Jadid Movement in Late 19th and Early 20th Century Turkestan: Educational Reform and the Development of National Consciousness

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DOI: Under Assignment

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Article Received: 23 February 2026

Article Accepted: 26 April 2026

Article Published: 27 April 2026

ABSTRACT

In this article, the essence and content of the new-method schools established by the Jadids in Turkestan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, as well as their teaching system, are analyzed on a scientific basis. The study examines the educational reforms of the Jadid movement, the introduction of the "usuli savtiya" (phonetic method), the renewal of curricula and subject content, textbook development, and approaches to education and moral upbringing. Based on the pedagogical views of Jadid educators such as Abdulla Avloni, Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, and Munavvarqori Abdurashidkhanov, the role of new-method schools in the development of national education is revealed. The article also evaluates the importance of the Jadid education system in social modernization and the formation of national consciousness through scientific conclusions.

Keywords: Jadidism; New-Method Schools; Usuli Savtiya; Phonetic Method; Educational Reform; Turkestan; Textbook Development; Moral Education; Enlightenment; Pedagogical Views; National Consciousness; Central Asian History.

1. Introduction

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, significant changes in the socio-political and cultural life of Turkestan created the need to reform the education system. Traditional teaching methods in schools and madrasas did not fully meet the demands of the time, as they were mainly based on memorizing religious texts and did not sufficiently cover practical and secular knowledge. As a result, certain gaps emerged in the processes of social development, the adoption of scientific achievements, and equipping the younger generation with modern knowledge.

Under such conditions, the Jadid movement emerged with the aim of enlightening the nation through education, modernizing the education system in accordance with contemporary requirements, and raising the younger generation as well-rounded individuals. The Jadids regarded education as the main means of social reform and sought to increase literacy, develop scientific thinking, and shape national consciousness by establishing new-method schools.

New-method schools, based on the "usuli savtiya" (phonetic method), were distinguished by their ability to teach reading and writing in a short period, introduce secular subjects into the educational process, and improve textbooks and methodological materials. These schools defined not only the provision of knowledge but also the development of moral and spiritual values as their primary objectives.

The main purpose of this article is to analyze the scientific and pedagogical foundations of the activities of Jadid new-method schools and their teaching system, to determine their role in the development of national education, and to reveal their historical significance. The study examines the stages of formation and development of this educational system based on the pedagogical views, textbooks, and scientific-theoretical sources of Jadid educators.

1.1. Study Objectives

The present study pursues the following specific objectives:

1. To analyze the historical context that led to the establishment of new-method schools in Turkestan in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, including the socio-political and cultural conditions that shaped the Jadid reform movement.
2. To examine the pedagogical foundations and teaching methodologies, particularly the "usuli savtiya" (phonetic method), employed in Jadid new-method schools and to assess their effectiveness in comparison with traditional educational practices.
3. To investigate the role of key Jadid educators — including Abdulla Avloni, Mahmudkhoja Behbudi, and Munavvarqori Abdurashidkhanov — in shaping the content, methodology, and moral dimension of the new-method school curriculum.
4. To evaluate the curriculum, textbook development, and subject content introduced in new-method schools and to highlight how they represented a departure from traditional rote-learning approaches.
5. To assess the system of moral and spiritual education integrated into new-method schools and to determine its contribution to the formation of national identity and civic consciousness among students.
6. To determine the historical legacy and contemporary relevance of the Jadid educational model for the modern education system of Uzbekistan and the broader Central Asian region.

2. Literature Review

Scholarly interest in the Jadid movement and its educational reforms has grown considerably over recent decades. Early foundational studies by Karimov (2001) situated the Jadids within the broader socio-political landscape of late-colonial Turkestan, emphasizing that their commitment to educational reform was inseparable from a wider agenda of national modernization. Similarly, Qosimov (2004) examined the intersection of enlightenment philosophy, literary production, and political advocacy within the Jadid movement, demonstrating that new-method schools were both pedagogical institutions and sites of ideological formation.

The history of Jadid schools in Turkestan has been chronicled in detail by Rajabov (2010), whose regional analysis documents the spread of new-method schools from Tashkent and Samarkand to the Fergana Valley and Bukhara. Kholmirezayev (2015) contributed a systematic treatment of Jadid pedagogy, outlining the theoretical underpinnings of the usuli savtiya (phonetic method) and its break from the traditional maktab model. These works collectively establish that the phonetic approach was not a mere technical improvement but a philosophical reorientation of the purpose of primary education.

In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, Turkestan society experienced a complex stage of socio-economic and cultural development. Colonial conditions, the growth of production and trade relations, as well as the introduction of European scientific achievements into the region, increased the demand for new ways of thinking and reforms in society. In particular, outdated forms of the education system emerged as one of the major factors hindering

national development. In traditional schools and madrasas, the teaching process was mainly focused on reading and memorizing religious texts, and insufficient attention was paid to developing students' independent thinking, analytical skills, and practical knowledge.

The process of acquiring literacy often took several years, and many students left school without fully mastering writing skills, resulting in a low level of general literacy in society. Under these conditions, the Jadid movement emerged and identified the radical reform of education as one of its main objectives. The Jadids aimed to lead the people toward progress through enlightenment, teach modern sciences, and shape national consciousness. Abdulla Avloni emphasized the role of education and upbringing in social life as follows: "For us, education is a matter of life or death." This idea shows that, in the view of the Jadids, schools were important institutions that determined the fate of the nation.

The establishment of new-method schools became a practical outcome of the Jadid movement. The first such schools began to appear in Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, the Fergana Valley, and other regions in the late 19th century. Their activities mainly relied on the initiatives of Jadid intellectuals, private funds, and public support. Mahmudkhoja Behbudi advocated directing funds spent on weddings and ceremonies toward the development of schools in order to mobilize the people for the cause of enlightenment.

More recent scholarship has revisited the Jadid legacy in light of post-independence educational policy in Uzbekistan. Ergashev and Nazarov (2025) argue that the Jadid emphasis on phonetic literacy, secular subjects, and moral education anticipates many principles enshrined in contemporary Uzbek curriculum reform. Toshmatov (2026) further contends that Jadidism constitutes a coherent indigenous modernization discourse whose pedagogical insights remain underutilized in current policy debates. These contemporary contributions reinforce the relevance of the present historical inquiry.

3. Methodology

The present study employs a qualitative, historical-descriptive research methodology grounded in documentary analysis. Primary sources comprising the published textbooks, pedagogical writings, and polemical essays of key Jadid intellectuals — notably Abdulla Avloni's *Turkiy Guliston* (1992), Munavvarqori Abdurashidkhanov's *Adibus-Soniy* (2005), and Mahmudkhoja Behbudi's *Padarkush* (1993) — were subjected to close textual analysis to identify their explicit and implicit pedagogical principles.

Secondary sources, including academic monographs, peer-reviewed journal articles, and institutional collections related to the history of Jadidism and education in Turkestan, were systematically reviewed and synthesized. The historical-comparative method was applied to juxtapose traditional maktab and madrasa education with the new-method school model, thereby isolating the distinctive innovations introduced by the Jadids. The thematic analysis technique was used to identify recurring themes across sources, including literacy pedagogy, curriculum design, moral education, and national consciousness. Findings were organized and presented through a combination of descriptive narrative and a structured comparative table (Table 1) to enhance clarity and scholarly accessibility.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. The Teaching System and Methodological Foundations in New-Method Schools

In the activities of Jadid new-method schools, improving the teaching system, increasing the effectiveness of education, and developing students' independent thinking skills were identified as important tasks. In these schools, the teaching process was organized based on scientific and pedagogical principles as well as modern didactic approaches. In this respect, new-method schools differed fundamentally from traditional education systems.

The most important methodological innovation of new-method schools was the introduction of the "usuli savtiya," that is, the phonetic method of teaching literacy. In this method, greater emphasis was placed on understanding the sound characteristics of letters rather than memorizing their names. Students were first taught to recognize sounds and then to combine them into syllables and words. As a result, reading and writing developed simultaneously, and the period required to achieve literacy was significantly shortened.

The effectiveness of the usuli savtiya method lies in the fact that it simultaneously developed students' auditory, visual, and cognitive abilities. During lessons, visual aids, written exercises, textual tasks, and question-and-answer methods were widely used. This made the educational process lively and interactive.

In new-method schools, the teaching process was based on the principle of gradual and step-by-step learning. Initially, instruction focused on basic literacy, followed by lessons aimed at mastering more complex knowledge. Students were divided into classes according to their level of knowledge, and separate programs were developed for each stage. This approach enabled the education process to be conducted in a systematic and consistent manner.

Curricula and subject content were also developed in accordance with new pedagogical requirements. In new-method schools, special attention was given to subjects such as the mother tongue, arithmetic, geography, history, natural sciences, ethics, and moral education. Through these subjects, students acquired not only theoretical knowledge but also practical life skills. In his textbooks, Munavvarqori Abdurashidkhanov emphasized the role of knowledge in developing human thinking and highlighted its practical significance.

Special attention was also given to the personality of the teacher in new-method schools. The Jadids regarded teachers as leading intellectuals of society and educators of the younger generation. Teachers sought to master new methods, plan lessons effectively, and take into account the individual characteristics of students. This contributed to improving the quality of education.

In addition, textbooks and teaching manuals became the methodological foundation of new-method schools. Textbooks created by Jadid authors were enriched with simple language, clear concepts, and real-life examples. Such an approach helped students acquire knowledge quickly and thoroughly.

In summary, the teaching system in new-method schools was formed on the basis of the usuli savtiya method, step-by-step education, integration of subjects, attention to the teacher's role, and modern textbook development. This system emerged as an effective and advanced pedagogical model in the history of education in Turkestan and created an important theoretical and practical foundation for subsequent educational reforms. Table 1 below provides a structured overview of the principal teaching methods and their educational significance.

Table 1. An Overview of Teaching Methods, Methodological Principles, and Their Practical Applications and Educational Significance in Jadid New-Method Schools of Turkestan (Late 19th and Early 20th Century)

No.	Method / Principle	Description	Practical Application	Educational Significance
1	Usuli Savtiya (Phonetic Method)	Teaching letters based on sounds	Sound → syllable → word → sentence sequence	Accelerated literacy development
2	Step-by-Step Education	Teaching knowledge from simple to complex	Primary → intermediate → advanced stages	Systematic formation of knowledge
3	Visual Method	Use of visual materials	Charts, cards, board, pictures	Facilitated understanding
4	Active Learning Method	Making students active participants	Question-answer, exercises, discussions	Developed independent thinking
5	Parallel Teaching of Reading and Writing	Teaching reading and writing simultaneously	Text reading + written exercises	Strengthened literacy skills
6	Principle of Simple and Clear Language	Using simple and accessible language	Simplicity in textbooks and texts	Faster knowledge acquisition
7	Practice-Oriented Education	Linking knowledge with real life	Calculations, daily-life examples	Formed practical skills
8	Class-Lesson System	Organising lessons based on groups	Fixed schedule and time	Ensured orderly education
9	Moral and Educational Method	Integrating moral education with learning	Ethical texts, advice	Ensured personal development
10	Assessment and Evaluation	Continuous monitoring of knowledge	Oral questioning, written tests	Improved education quality

Source: Compiled by the author based on analysis of Jadid pedagogical sources (Avloni, 1992; Abdurashidkhanov, 2005; Behbudi, 1993; Kholmirezayev, 2015).

4.2. The System of Moral Education and the Role of Spiritual and Ethical Teaching

In the activities of Jadid new-method schools, along with providing knowledge, educating the younger generation as morally and ethically mature individuals was identified as a major priority. In the view of Jadid enlighteners, education and upbringing were inseparable processes, and their harmony was considered the main condition for social development. Therefore, in new-method schools, the issue of moral education was regarded as a central component of the learning process.

In his pedagogical views, Abdulla Avloni emphasized the vital importance of education and linked it to the fate of the nation. According to him, upbringing determines not only personal development but also the future of society as a whole. For this reason, special attention was given in Jadid schools to the formation of such qualities as morality, etiquette, patriotism, diligence, and humanism. In new-method schools, the process of moral education was carried out through special subjects, textbooks, and educational activities. Topics such as "Morality," "Etiquette," and "Upbringing" were included in the curriculum, through which students were taught rules of social behavior, respect for elders, kindness to younger people, honesty, and justice. The moral stories and advice presented in Munavvarqori Abdurashidkhanov's work *Adibus-soniy* served as an important source in this regard.

The idea of patriotism also occupied a leading place in the moral education system. The Jadids aimed to raise the younger generation in the spirit of respect for their nation, language, culture, and history. National values, the activities of historical figures, the bravery of the people in the past, and spiritual heritage were widely reflected in textbooks and literary texts. This contributed to the formation of a sense of national identity among students.

In addition, special attention was paid to labor education in new-method schools. Students were encouraged to engage in honest work, acquire professional skills, and be useful to society. The Jadids emphasized the need to link knowledge with practical activity and sought to organize education in close connection with real life.

In the educational process, the personality of the teacher was considered an important factor. The Jadids viewed teachers not only as providers of knowledge but also as moral role models and educators. Teachers' behavior, communication style, level of knowledge, and worldview served as examples for students. Therefore, the Jadids also paid special attention to training teachers and improving their professional qualifications.

In conclusion, the system of moral education in new-method schools was formed in close connection with academic instruction and served to ensure the intellectual, spiritual, and social development of individuals. The educational model created by the Jadids occupies an important place in the history of national pedagogy and continues to have significant theoretical and practical value for the modern education system.

5. Conclusion and Future Recommendations

The Jadids' new-method schools are regarded as an important educational phenomenon that marked a qualitatively new stage in the history of education in Turkestan. These schools eliminated the limited capacities of the traditional education system and formed a national and modern pedagogical model based on scientific achievements. The Jadids interpreted education not as a personal need but as a strategic factor in national development.

The theoretical foundation of this view is clearly expressed in the famous statement of Abdulla Avloni: "In short, for us, education is a matter of life or death, salvation or destruction, happiness or misfortune." This quotation shows that, in the Jadids' view, education and upbringing were closely connected with the existence and future of the nation. Accordingly, in new-method schools, not only literacy but also the formation of well-rounded individuals was defined as a priority.

The "usuli savtiya," which formed the methodological basis of new-method schools, made it possible to develop literacy quickly and effectively. Through this method, the parallel teaching of reading and writing, the use of visual

aids, and active learning techniques enhanced students' independent thinking. As a result, the educational process shifted from a passive, memorization-based form to an active and creative one.

The Jadids' sense of social responsibility in education can also be seen in the views of Mahmudkhoja Behbudi. Calling on the people to mobilize material resources for enlightenment, he wrote: "Funds spent on weddings and ceremonies should be directed to schools." This idea indicates that the Jadids viewed schools not as private initiatives but as public institutions that should be supported by society. Munavvarqori Abdurashidkhanov's textbooks played a particularly important role in renewing the content of education.

An important feature of the Jadid education system was its ability to integrate knowledge, moral education, and national consciousness into a unified pedagogical framework. The wide inclusion of moral advice, patriotic texts, and ideas of labor and responsibility in textbooks helped develop students' social activity and civic awareness. This further enhanced the role of schools in social modernization.

In general, the Jadids' new-method schools:

- accelerated literacy development,
- promoted scientific thinking,
- strengthened national self-awareness,
- integrated moral education with academic learning, and
- enhanced the social status of the teaching profession.

Therefore, the educational model created by the Jadids is not only of historical significance but also remains an important source of theoretical and practical experience for the modern national education system. Their legacy continues to serve as a valuable guide for developing education on the basis of humanism, national identity, and modernity.

5.1. Future Recommendations

1. Future studies should conduct systematic comparative analyses between Jadid new-method schools in Turkestan and analogous educational reform movements in Egypt, the Ottoman Empire, and the Crimea during the same period, so as to situate Jadidism within a broader Muslim reformist tradition.
2. Scholars should investigate the influence of Jadid pedagogical principles on the subsequent Soviet-era school system in Central Asia and trace the degree to which early Bolshevik literacy campaigns appropriated and transformed the Jadids' educational innovations.
3. It is recommended that the phonetic teaching methodology developed by the Jadids be systematically evaluated by contemporary Uzbek language-pedagogy specialists to determine its potential utility in addressing ongoing literacy challenges in rural areas of Uzbekistan.
4. Future research should prioritize the digitization and open-access publication of original Jadid textbooks, manuscripts, and periodicals held in archives across Tashkent, Samarkand, and Bukhara, thereby facilitating wider scholarly access and deeper interdisciplinary analysis.

5. Policymakers in Uzbekistan and neighboring Central Asian states should examine the Jadid educational philosophy — with its emphasis on integrating secular subjects, mother-tongue instruction, moral formation, and civic responsibility — as a historically grounded framework for holistic national curriculum development.

6. Future interdisciplinary research combining historical, pedagogical, sociological, and postcolonial theoretical perspectives is encouraged in order to comprehensively assess the long-term societal impact of Jadid educational reforms on national consciousness formation across Central Asia.

Declarations

Source of Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Competing Interests Statement

The author declares no competing interests.

Consent for publication

The author gives consent for publication of this manuscript in its submitted form.

Authors' contributions

Fozilov Mirashraf Azamatovich is the sole author. He designed the study, conducted the literature review, analyzed the primary and secondary sources, and wrote the full manuscript.

Informed Consent

Not applicable for this study.

Availability of Data and Material

All primary sources analyzed in this study are publicly available through the Ziyouz Electronic Library (<https://ziyouz.com>) and cited institutional publications.

Institutional Review Board Statement

Not applicable for this study.

Ethical Approval

Not applicable for this study.

Acknowledgement

The author gratefully acknowledges the academic guidance and support provided by the Faculty of History and Law, Bukhara State University.

Declaration of Artificial Intelligence

Artificial intelligence tools were not used in the preparation, writing, or analysis of this manuscript.

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