

REFORMS UNDERWAY IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

(ON THE EXAMPLE OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF UZBEKISTAN)

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Abstract

The education system has been an important sector in all periods and societies of human history. This article highlights that the development of education in Uzbekistan has become a focal point of state policy, leading to the initiation of large-scale reforms and substantial discussions on the matter. The advancement of the new Uzbekistan is inseparable from the quality of its science and education sectors. It's not without reason that in developed nations, educational development is considered a top priority, as the future progress of a country hinges on its achievements in this realm. Even within the reforms of the New Uzbekistan, there's a clear emphasis on enhancing educational activities and nurturing the longstanding desire for knowledge among our people, cultivated over centuries. Today, our youth perceive education as the cornerstone for intellectual competence, dignified livelihoods in independent life, securing permanent employment post-professional training, assuming responsibility, upholding human dignity, and striving for excellence. The integration process in the realms of science and education underscores the pivotal role of this educational system in driving social change.

Keywords: Education, continuing education, quality of education, Law “On Education”, integration, Development Strategy, science, higher education, people, capital.

INTRODUCTION

The development of New Uzbekistan cannot be imagined without science, education and enlightenment. It is not for nothing that the development of education is set as the first priority even in developed countries. After all, the future prosperity of the country depends on the achievements made in this area.

Today, in the reforms of New Uzbekistan, the further improvement of educational activities, the aspiration of our people to science, which has been formed over the centuries, is reflected in our lofty goals. Our young people perceive education as the most important determinant in order to be intellectually competent, live a decent life when they step into independent life, acquire a profession and get a permanent job, take responsibility, prevent the degradation of human dignity and achieve perfection.

Today, the importance of education in the world is steadily increasing, and it has become one of the most important factors in bringing not only the economy, but also the entire society to

a qualitatively new level. taking into account the prospects for integration into the educational and scientific space, the main principles of the Bologna process, modernization implies a radical change in all institutions, systems, structures of society and human life, as a result of which economic, technological complexities - aspects of human and social life, and even the entire society, cover, consistency, a change in one factor in the general socio-cultural system involuntarily caused certain changes in other factors. It should be noted that in recent years, practical work has been carried out to organize all stages of the education sector based on modern requirements, integrate international joint standards. In particular, reforms and practical measures in the education system have been identified in the following areas. In particular, such principles as

- 1) in the field of preschool education;
- 2) general secondary and secondary specialized education;
- 3) higher education;
- 4) post-secondary education;
- 5) retraining and advanced training of personnel.

It is promising that fundamental reforms in the field of education, which are being implemented as a priority direction of state policy, will begin, first of all, in the field of preschool education and upbringing. In today's globalization process, the role and importance of the preschool education system, which is considered the most important link in the upbringing of children, is increasing in the life of our society.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODS

Adoption of the Incheon Declaration at the World Education Forum (Incheon, Republic of Korea, 19-25 May 2015), UNESCO - "Education 2030", a new concept of education in the Millennium Development Goals, Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and Global Citizenship Education (GCE), UNESCO World Conference on ESD (Aichi, Nagoya in 2014) Quality education stimulates creativity and knowledge and ensures the acquisition of basic literacy and numeracy skills, as well as analytical skills, problem-solving skills and other higher-level knowledge, interpersonal and social skills. Globalization and modernization, which have taken on a global scale today, mean that all cultures are modernizing or moving in this direction, and although the current pace of development in time is incomparably higher than in previous centuries, fundamental changes affect interpersonal relationships, the increasing need for highly qualified specialists in modern society, the expansion of mutual exchange of experience in education, and the acceleration of socio-cultural integration create unique complexities in higher education.

Recently, the issue of developing higher education in Uzbekistan has risen to the level of state policy. Large-scale reforms have begun in this regard, and serious changes are taking place in the field. The Concept of the Development of the Higher Education System of the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030, adopted in 2019[1], became an important basis for determining the strategic goals, objectives, short- and long-term stages of the development of higher education, as well as for developing programs and comprehensive measures in the field.

The Law “On Education” adopted in 2020 [2] undoubtedly opened up new horizons in the development of this sector and in the acquisition of modern knowledge by our youth.

As a result of these legislative acts and the measures taken, as noted by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Sh. Mirziyoyev, “over the next 5 years, the admission quota for higher education was increased 3 times, and in 2021, 182 thousand young people were created to become students. This means that the overall coverage reached 28 percent. However, 4 years ago, only 9 out of 100 children had the opportunity to study in higher education” [3].

As the legal basis for the reforms being carried out in this area, we can cite the Law “On Preschool Education and Upbringing”. This Law establishes the main directions of state policy in the field of preschool education and upbringing, state guarantees for receiving preschool education and upbringing, and other similar issues.

In addition, it is no exaggeration to say that the establishment of the Ministry of Preschool and School Education for the first time in our country was one of the main reforms in this area.

A number of decrees and resolutions were adopted to organize and modernize all stages of the education sector based on modern requirements.

In particular, one of the most important documents adopted in the education system was the adoption of a new edition of the Law "On Education". Based on this Law, the main principles, education system, types and forms of education were clearly defined.

Also, according to the Law, state higher education, secondary specialized, professional educational institutions and their branches, as well as higher, secondary specialized, professional educational organizations and their branches with state participation will be established by the President or the Government. It was determined that the establishment of non-state educational institutions will be carried out by their founders. Licenses for non-state educational organizations will be issued by the State Inspectorate for Quality Control of Education.

With this Law, the Laws “On Education” and “On the National Program for Personnel Training” of August 29, 1997 have lost their force.

Accordingly, we can say that the adoption and implementation of this Law has become one of the most important documents adopted in the field of education.

As our President Sh. M. Mirziyoyev emphasized, “the more educated our children are when they graduate from school, the faster the sectors of the economy based on high technologies will develop, and the opportunity will arise to solve many social problems. Therefore, when I say that the threshold of a new Uzbekistan begins with school, I think that all our people support this idea” [4].

In accordance with the Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-158 dated September 11, 2023 “On the Strategy of Uzbekistan - 2030” [5], the adoption of the Strategy of “Uzbekistan - 2030” has begun a new stage in the implementation of educational reforms in the new Uzbekistan. Based on the Decree, in order to ensure its high-quality and timely implementation in the “Year of Human Attention and Quality Education”, Resolution

No. 300 of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Measures for the High-Quality and Timely Implementation of the Strategy of “Uzbekistan - 2030” in 2023 was adopted.

RESULTS

The "Uzbekistan - 2030" strategy provides for the implementation of a total of 5 priority areas, 100 goals, 369 measures, 190 tasks, 306 target indicators, and the development of 118 regulatory and legal documents in this regard. The implementation of this programmatic document will provide every person in our country with convenient opportunities, certain benefits, material and spiritual benefits, and every family and household will find prosperity, abundance, grace and blessing.

The first priority area: This priority area includes 44 goals, i.e. from goal 1 to goal 44, aimed at creating appropriate conditions for every person to realize their potential. This includes 156 practical measures and 70 tasks related to education, healthcare, social protection, youth policy, spirituality, and the development of 130 target indicators. It is also planned to prepare and adopt 38 draft regulatory legal acts.

For example, the legislation provides for certain privileges for teachers:

- ◆ October 1 is designated as "Teacher and Mentor Day" and this day is a holiday (day off).
- ◆ All teaching staff who provide education to children will undergo regular free medical examinations.
- ◆ Teachers will be provided with 56 days of annual paid leave.
- ◆ The working hours for teaching staff will be set at a maximum of 36 hours per week.
- ◆ School teachers will be given a bonus of 10 to 40 percent based on performance evaluation criteria, and librarians and psychologists will be given a bonus of 10 to 20 percent.
- ◆ Teachers who prepare the winner of the Science Olympiad will be encouraged.
- ◆ Financial assistance will be provided when teachers become ill.
- ◆ Teachers who win the Olympiad will be given a bonus of up to 150 percent.
- ◆ Teachers who are internationally recognized and have national certificates in the subject they teach will be paid an additional monthly bonus of 50 percent compared to their tariff rate.
- ◆ The school that won the “Best School for Teaching Foreign Languages” competition will be awarded half a billion soums.
- ◆ Inclusive class teachers will be given a bonus of up to 40 percent.
- ◆ Teachers teaching in remote areas will be given a bonus of up to 50 percent.
- ◆ Professors-teachers who have prepared winners of international and republican Olympiads in mathematics, physics, chemistry and biology will be given a cash bonus.
- ◆ Teachers with many years of experience will not be involved in mandatory certification.
- ◆ Teachers who have prepared international science Olympiads will be given a qualification category without certification.
- ◆ The qualification category of teachers who have prepared winners of the republican science Olympiad will be increased by one level.

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- ◆ Professors-teachers in the medical field will be paid an additional salary for performing medical and diagnostic work.
 - ◆ Monthly bonuses are given to foreign language teachers of educational institutions.
 - ◆ There is responsibility for interference in the activities of teachers, which is guaranteed by law.

The new Uzbekistan begins precisely from the school threshold, from the education system, the development of the country relies on science and innovation. After all, preschool and school education, the system of higher and secondary specialized education, and scientific and cultural institutions are the four integral links of the Third Renaissance, and our kindergarten teachers, school teachers, professors-teachers and scientific and creative intellectuals are the four pillars of the competitiveness of our country in the era of the new Renaissance, globalization.

In our country, unprecedented changes are being made in the development of the closely interconnected education sector - preschool education, school education, secondary specialized and higher education systems, and scientific and research institutions. In particular, the education sector has been radically transformed in a short period of time:

- the level of coverage of children with preschool education has been increased from 27% to 72%;
- the creation of an additional 700 thousand places in school education, the establishment of about 200 presidential, creative and specialized schools with a completely new content and form, as well as 400 private schools;
- the adoption and implementation of decisions on the development of mathematics, physics and chemistry and biology;
- the introduction of modern methods, quality and competition into education, the complete renewal of textbooks based on the most advanced foreign experiences, the introduction of thousands of foreign teachers to schools, and the implementation of specific measures to pay decent wages for the work of instructors;
- The level of youth coverage of higher education increased from 9% in 2016 to 38% in 2022
- 4.2 times, the number of higher education institutions increased by 3 times (from 77 to 210), the establishment of 65 more non-state higher education institutions (there were none in 2016), and the number of branches of foreign higher education institutions increased by 4.2 times, which indicates the scale of work done in this regard.

As a result, today, children from many ordinary families are winning international science Olympiads, more than 1 million of our young people are studying in higher education (270 thousand in 2016), entering prestigious foreign universities. Their parents are overjoyed.

At the same time, changes in this area are just the beginning of the work being done. Today, the issue of further improving the quality of education is of urgent importance. According to the results of analyses conducted with international experts, the existing conditions in our lives today allow children to realize only 60 percent of their potential.

DISCUSSION

First, by 2030, fully cover the need for preschool education, bringing its coverage to 100 percent, and developing the material and technical base of kindergartens. For this purpose:

- An opportunity will be created to provide loans for a period of 10 years at a rate of 7%, and a procedure will be developed for the full exemption of expenses of manufacturing enterprises for the construction of kindergartens from taxes;
- Measures will be taken to build an additional 2 thousand kindergartens by 2030;
- A procedure for state reimbursement of the costs of kindergartens, including private kindergartens, for children from needy families will be introduced;
- Measures will be taken to provide each kindergarten with a computer class. This, in turn, will serve to teach children modern information technologies from an early age and ensure their high potential in the future.

Also, the development of the infrastructure of kindergartens and schools will be initiated, including the full provision of filtered drinking water, sanitation and hygiene infrastructure, and in order to promote healthy nutrition of children, they will be provided with milk enriched with protein, vitamins and minerals, and bread products enriched with iodine.

Secondly, the quality of education will be radically improved by creating an additional 2.5 million student places in schools. To this end:

- The “500 thousand student places per year” program will be developed and implemented;
- Additional incentives will be provided to private education, and the construction of schools based on the principle of public-private partnership will be widely introduced;
- Primary school students will be fully provided with educational tablets and the necessary financial opportunities will be created for this;
- Free “school buses” will be launched in remote areas;
- By 2030, specialized schools called “Talent — Aspiration — Prospect” will be established in all districts and cities, where conditions will be created that are no less than those of the Presidential schools, and a 70 percent quota will be allocated for children from needy families;
- Teachers who are “language speakers” will be attracted to all schools, and measures will be taken to allocate 200 billion soums annually for these purposes. Because knowledge of foreign languages is the key that opens the doors of the world for our youth.

Thirdly, to develop higher education and science systems based on advanced foreign experience. To this end:

- the main task will be to introduce at least 50 joint educational programs and a “double degree system” (“double degree”) in cooperation with foreign universities that are among the “Top 500” in the world. Today, the scope of education based on “double degree” educational programs in cooperation with prestigious universities around the world (USA, Germany, France, Italy, Finland, the Netherlands, Turkey, Russia, Indonesia, Israel and a number of other countries) is expanding.

This serves to establish training of personnel in the necessary specialties that serve the development of our society and state and to improve the quality of education;

- programs worth 200 million US dollars will be implemented to send talented young people to study at the most prestigious foreign universities at state expense. These initiatives will serve to increase Uzbekistan's competitiveness at a time when most countries of the world are on the verge of the "Fourth Industrial Revolution";

- financial opportunities will be further expanded to allocate 1 billion US dollars for the development of science and innovation.

Also, additional measures will be taken to recognize and encourage the hard and honorable work of representatives of culture, art and literature, workers in the field of spirituality, and all intellectuals [6].

These programmatic documents, which determine the main directions of development of our country in the next 7 years, are extremely important in that they are aimed at realizing the will of our people to build a free, prosperous, powerful New Uzbekistan, creating all opportunities for each citizen to develop their potential, raising a healthy, educated and spiritually mature generation, forming a strong economy, ensuring justice, the rule of law, security and stability.

The goal of the "Uzbekistan - 2030" strategy is to create decent living conditions for all people living in Uzbekistan, regardless of where they live. It presents the goals and performance indicators of the Strategy in a convenient form, and it includes 100 goals in 5 priority areas. These include creating appropriate conditions for each person to realize their potential, ensuring the well-being of the population through sustainable economic growth, saving water resources and protecting the environment, ensuring the rule of law, organizing public administration at the service of the people, and consistently continuing the policy based on the principle of a "safe and peace-loving state." It should be noted that a significant part of the Strategy is devoted to equalizing the living standards and conditions of the population throughout Uzbekistan, including in remote areas and regions, as well as paying priority attention to the education sector. For example, according to the program document, from January 1, 2024, students of state preschool educational organizations will be provided with milk enriched with protein, vitamins and minerals, and bread products enriched with iodine. This, in turn, will ensure that the young generation, who are our future, will grow up healthy and well-rounded in all respects. At the same time, it will serve to reduce the incidence of various diseases among children. Because if more attention is paid to the health of our children in a timely manner, this will give the desired effect.

Also, as an experiment, in the Kushkupir and Khanka districts of the Khorezm region, all primary school students will be provided with educational tablets, and in the future this experiment will be gradually introduced in all regions of the republic.

In order to raise general secondary education to a new level, it is planned to organize 208 "Talent-Aspiration-Istiqbol" boarding schools by 2030. The strategy plans to organize specialized schools in all cities and districts "with conditions no less than those of the Presidential schools". It should be noted that providing children with separate education (tracking) based on their intellectual abilities will allow for better development of "gifted" children, taking into account their needs during education, and generally improving the quality of education.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, education is a matter of the future, a matter of life and death. Therefore, we have no right to delay reforms in this area. Because, since 64% of the population of our country is made up of young people, during the renewal processes and reforms in our country, special attention is paid to the education sector in order to raise young people with love for the nation, the Motherland, and not indifferent to their fate, and to be modern young people worthy of their ancestors. The results of the large-scale work on the construction of schools that meet the requirements of the times, as well as the encouragement of talented students, are reflected in the results and achievements achieved today. Indeed, the future of the renewed Uzbekistan is based on us, the youth, who have embarked on a long journey with a view to achieving these lofty goals, and are building the foundation of the Third Renaissance. Therefore, if we all conscientiously work towards a common goal, taking advantage of the opportunities and reforms created by our current President, then victory will certainly be on our side. For this reason, raising a highly educated and intellectually developed generation is the basis for building a New Uzbekistan.

Within the framework of the strategy, it is planned to introduce elective subjects for senior classes in more than 120 schools throughout the country in the 2023-2024 academic year. As part of the reforms of the state policy on youth and sports, it was envisaged to achieve a thorough mastery of at least two foreign languages and one profession among school graduates.

The document also notes that many researchers and practitioners in the field of education, in general, the creation of equal opportunities for all to receive quality education will make an even greater contribution to the development of human capital in the country.

“There is no doubt that the noble goal set before us is to lay the foundation for the Third Renaissance, to create the conditions for raising new Ulugbeks, Ibn Sina, Khorezmians, Navoi, and Baburs from among our children. This is especially important from the point of view of implementing today's Development Strategy.”

So, analyzing the above, we can conclude that reforms in the field of education are no less relevant and practical than reforms in other areas today. Because continuing reforms in this area on a larger scale is the need of the hour.

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