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MODERNIZATION OF NON-STATE HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE NEW UZBEKISTAN

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Abstract. This article examines contemporary reforms within the non-state higher education system in the context of the "New Uzbekistan." It discusses strategic directions, the modernization of private higher education institutions, international cooperation, and the challenges facing the non-state higher education sector. These reforms are aimed at improving the quality of non-state higher education and training competitive professionals capable of succeeding in a globalized environment. The article analyzes the role of non-state educational institutions in the modernization of the higher education system in the New Uzbekistan. It explores issues related to the establishment of non-state universities, the expansion of the higher education sphere, and the development of competition within the market for educational services. The study investigates the potential for integrating modern technologies into private higher education and training competitive personnel in alignment with labor market demands. Furthermore, it addresses matters concerning educational quality, licensing, accreditation, research capacity, and the institutional stability of non-state universities. The development of non-state higher education institutions is viewed as a key factor in enhancing the nation's intellectual potential and modernizing the higher education system. The article explores the methodological foundations for the development of non-state higher education, including the scholarly significance of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Education." The author notes that the growing number of non-state higher education institutions serves as a vital mechanism for providing young people with access to higher education. The study highlights that the opportunities fostered within non-state universities are becoming increasingly inclusive, aligning with international standards. Thanks to the legal and economic conditions established in the country for the development of non-state universities, these institutions are confidently entering the education market. Moreover, the necessary environment has been created to ensure the presence of qualified professors and lecturers, who play a crucial, practical role in securing the competitiveness of these higher education institutions. Through this process, non-state universities are preparing a new generation of competitive bachelor's and master's degree holders—individuals essential to the country's socio-economic sectors and its system of governance. Research findings indicate that, within a market economy, graduates of non-state universities successfully secure worthy positions across a variety of fields.

Keywords: non-state universities, reform, development strategy, international cooperation.

Introduction.

In the modern world, higher education plays a pivotal role in the formation and development of a national economy and society. Amid the rapid changes and challenges facing Uzbekistan, the country is actively reforming its non-state higher education system to adapt to new requirements and expectations. This article analyzes the essence and primary directions of the reforms within Uzbekistan's non-state higher education sector—framed by the "Development Strategy for a New Uzbekistan"—while also evaluating the future prospects and challenges confronting these universities.

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Methods and Methodology.

Through the use of sociological research methods, economic statistics, and comparative analysis, the study identifies key issues within Uzbekistan's private higher education system. An approach based on data analysis and expert opinion highlights factors that hinder the development of non-state higher education, such as limited access for certain youth demographics, a misalignment between curricula and labor market needs, and the insufficient implementation of modern teaching methodologies. The theoretical and methodological foundation of this research is drawn from the works, decrees, and resolutions of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Sh. M. Mirziyoyev. Furthermore, the laws of the Republic of Uzbekistan have played a significant role in shaping the core conceptual framework of this scholarly work.

Main Body.

The strategic directions for reforming higher education—and the profound reforms currently underway within the higher education sector of the "New Uzbekistan"—are rooted in a commitment to enhancing the quality of higher education and ensuring its relevance within a global context. For non-state universities, key strategic initiatives include the revision of curricula, the implementation of modern teaching methodologies, and the strengthening of international academic ties [1, 4]. A vital aspect of reforming the non-state higher education sector is the modernization of the educational process. This entails infrastructure improvements, the advancement of information technologies, the integration of artificial intelligence into curricula, and the creation of incentives for research and development activities among both students and faculty [2, 21]. In the context of global integration, Uzbekistan is actively fostering international cooperation within the sphere of private higher education. Today, non-state universities support initiatives aimed at increasing the mobility of students and faculty, as well as participation in international educational programs. Consequently, it is essential to identify the prospects and challenges facing Uzbekistan's non-state higher education system amidst the broader reforms taking place in society. Addressing issues such as the continued modernization of universities, ensuring the accessibility of private higher education, and cultivating a competitive workforce—capable of excelling on the global stage—remains a primary objective for these institutions [3, 14]. Contemporary Uzbek society exists and evolves within a rapidly changing world; the reality is that the continuous improvement of economic sectors and the social sphere has become an essential prerequisite for the nation's progress.

In accordance with the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan "On Measures for the Further Development of Non-State Educational Services," non-state educational organizations began their operations in Uzbekistan on January 1, 2018.

The objective of this initiative is to further develop the non-state educational services sector, foster a healthy competitive environment between state and non-state educational institutions to ensure high-quality education, and improve the operating conditions for legal entities within the non-state education sector. Key priorities and tasks for the further development of non-state educational services include identifying and supporting talented children and youth, as well as creating a favorable environment that ensures the competitiveness of education and upbringing. At the same time, the rapid growth of the market for fee-based educational services—which offers alternative pathways to obtaining high-quality and accessible education—has placed an increased focus on ensuring the efficiency and effectiveness of education through the use of innovative pedagogical approaches and methods .education and modern

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technologies, taking into account advanced international experience. Non-state educational institutions established in our country operate on the basis of state educational standards and requirements. In strict compliance with current legal and regulatory acts, they take measures to secure highly qualified teaching staff and create the necessary conditions for organizing the educational process. It is permitted to utilize unused state-owned buildings, structures, and facilities under public-private partnership arrangements.

The objectives are, first, to create a favorable environment that ensures high-quality education by identifying and supporting gifted children and talented youth; and second, to foster a healthy competitive landscape through the rapid development of a market for fee-based educational services. This will provide alternative pathways to quality, accessible education—complementing traditional educational offerings—while drawing on international best practices and enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the education sector through the application of innovative pedagogical approaches, teaching methods, and modern technologies.

Furthermore, in non-state educational institutions, relationships with parents or other legal representatives of students are governed by a contract that defines the terms of study, tuition fees, and the rights and obligations of the parties. Given our country's commitment to the principles of social development, it is mandated that legal entities providing non-state educational services—covering preschool, general secondary, and higher education—must admit capable and talented children from families in need of social protection on a competitive (grant-based) basis. Such students shall receive free education, with the number of such places amounting to at least 10 percent of the total number of students enrolled in the institution. With the aim of further developing the provision of non-state educational services in the Republic of Uzbekistan, fostering a healthy competitive environment between state and non-state educational institutions to ensure high-quality education, and improving the conditions for legal entities operating in this sector, those legal entities engaged in providing non-state educational services to the public...

The Republic of Uzbekistan is moving confidently and dynamically toward its ultimate goal: to join the ranks of the world's developed, democratic nations. A fundamental mechanism in this pursuit is the non-state higher education system—a framework built upon the systematic organization, creative adaptation, and application of the experience accumulated by previous generations [4, 10]. In this new phase of development, non-state higher education must align with the current demands of society.

The republic faces a shortage of qualified personnel for new economic sectors, business, entrepreneurship, and joint ventures. This is particularly evident in fields such as space research, the nuclear industry, the information economy, artificial intelligence, heavy machinery manufacturing, and the pharmaceutical industry. Analysis indicates an insufficient connection between higher education institutions and the private sector. Foreign companies entering the Uzbek market encounter difficulties in finding qualified specialists with a higher technical education. Furthermore, the material and technical infrastructure of certain universities fails to meet modern standards. The integration of information technology and artificial intelligence into the educational process remains limited—both in terms of expanding access and in the application of innovative teaching methodologies—and there is a shortage of faculty members proficient in foreign languages, especially within specialized disciplines. There is also a need to further refine the system for training Doctors of Science and to improve the operations of specialized academic councils responsible for the defense of doctoral dissertations.

Non-state higher education institutions require a systematic approach to professional development for their faculty, including opportunities for training at universities abroad. The transition to a credit-

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modular system necessitates a fundamental overhaul of how students' independent work is organized [5, 2]. As Uzbekistan enters a new stage of development, the higher education system requires further enhancement—specifically, a radical improvement in the quality of instruction through the introduction of modern educational programs, the refinement of textbooks and teaching materials, and the incorporation of pedagogical and "smart" technologies into the learning process [6].

In the "New Uzbekistan," targeted efforts are underway to expand young people's access to higher education by developing distance learning. This discussion focuses on strategic vision, access, governance, quality assurance, and the financing of the higher education system, as well as its alignment with the country's new phase of development. Uzbekistan, like many other countries, faces challenges and opportunities in the realm of higher education in the modern world [7,31].

In the modern world, knowledge evolves rapidly, necessitating flexible and relevant academic curricula. This entails several key aspects: the ongoing review and updating of curricula across all levels of education—which involves not only introducing new courses and subjects but also adapting existing ones to meet contemporary demands—and the integration of modern educational materials, such as digital resources, online courses, and interactive textbooks, to help students learn more effectively and acquire essential, up-to-date skills. Furthermore, it involves increasing the share of practical training, including internships and project-based activities [8, 11]. Research and innovation play a vital role in today's world; therefore, fostering research activity among students and faculty is an integral component of higher education reform. This includes allocating funding and establishing scientific laboratories to support research across various fields [9, 32], as well as encouraging the publication of findings in scholarly journals and participation in international conferences. Strengthening international cooperation is another key factor in the successful reform of higher education, encompassing the establishment of partnerships with foreign universities and the exchange of expertise in education and research [10, 41].

Conclusion.

The reform of the higher education system, within the context of a new phase of development in Uzbekistan, represents a significant period in the country's strategic advancement. Current reforms are aimed at enhancing the quality of education, improving accessibility for all segments of the population, and preparing professionals who are capable of looking toward the future with confidence and competing on the global stage. A wide range of initiatives—such as the revision of academic curricula, the promotion of research activity, and international integration—create unique opportunities for students and educators in Uzbekistan.

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