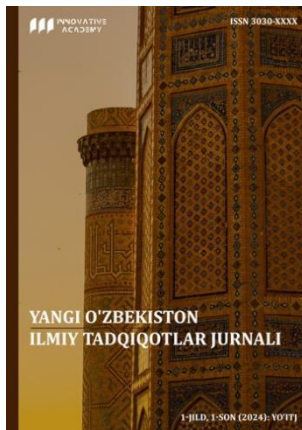




TRANSFORMATION OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION: THE EXPERIENCE OF JAPAN AND UZBEKISTAN.

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ABSTRACT

This article examines the impact of globalization on the higher education system using the examples of Japan and Uzbekistan. The study explores Japan's strategies aimed at increasing international competitiveness and the ongoing processes of educational modernization in Uzbekistan. Through the analysis of academic mobility, digitalization, and the implementation of the "University 3.0" model, scientifically grounded recommendations tailored to the context of Uzbekistan were developed. The research draws upon the scientific conclusions of Professor B. K. Umarov regarding human capital and digital transformation.

Introduction. Globalization processes in the higher education system demand not only the dissemination of knowledge but also the training of flexible specialists for the global labor market. In the modern world, globalization has moved higher education beyond national borders, making it an integral part of the international intellectual market. This very process poses a fundamental challenge for universities: to unify the quality of education and to account for technological trends in personnel training. As Professor B. K. Umarov noted: "In the context of globalization, higher education institutions should not merely be suppliers of personnel, but subjects that generate innovative ideas and form high-tech human capital" [1, p. 45]. While this transformation process is taking place in developed countries like Japan within the framework of the "Society 5.0" concept, in Uzbekistan, it is undergoing a stage of systemic modernization and digitalization. Japan was selected as a country that synthesizes Eastern traditions and Western innovations, while Uzbekistan represents a nation in a stage of rapid reforms.

Discussion and Results. Since the 2000s, we can observe that Japanese higher education has embarked on a path of radical reforms. These reforms were primarily aimed at increasing the autonomy of universities and making them competitive on an international scale. By 2004, as a result of these processes, universities were granted the status of "National University Corporations." Consequently, this provided higher education institutions with financial independence and the opportunity to utilize market mechanisms in management [2, p. 12]. Universities were restructured as "Research Centers."

The Japanese government has allocated substantial grants to universities to help them enter the top 100 global rankings. In this regard, the primary focus was placed on increasing

the number of programs taught in English and raising the share of foreign professors to 20–30 percent [3, p. 88]. Furthermore, in 2015, the Japanese government began encouraging universities to place greater emphasis on applied STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) fields, which is part of a strategy to adapt to market demands.

The development of higher education in Uzbekistan is being carried out in direct conjunction with economic reforms, specifically based on the Development Concept until 2030. In his scientific research, B. K. Umarov explained the economic foundations of the transformation in Uzbekistan's higher education system as follows: "The diversification of the market for educational services and the creation of healthy competition between state and private higher education institutions are the primary factors ensuring the adaptation of educational quality to global standards" [4, p. 102]. **Key transformational steps currently being implemented in Uzbekistan:**

Implementation of the credit-module system: The transition to the ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) has enabled student mobility and allowed the harmonization of curricula with international standards (via the HEMIS platform) [5].

Financial autonomy: Starting from 2022, many state higher education institutions transitioned to a self-financing system; as a result of this process, it became possible to open new academic programs based on market demands [6].

International recognition: Increasing the share of scientific articles in the SCOPUS and Web of Science databases has become a state-level priority to ensure the international recognition of Uzbekistan's universities. In the last five years, the number of private higher education institutions and branches of foreign universities in the country has increased, which creates competition in the education market. It is observable that there are a number of similarities and differences between the experiences of Japan and Uzbekistan in the context of globalization.

Firstly, while the Japanese government focuses its attention on "quality and research," in Uzbekistan, at the current stage, "coverage and modernization" hold the primary importance.

Secondly, the Japanese experience of creating "Spin-off" enterprises among universities is crucial for the implementation of the new "University 3.0" model in Uzbekistan. A "Spin-off" occurs when a student or scientist develops a new type of invention and either sells it for production or opens a separate firm; this is called a spin-off. In my opinion, applying this Japanese experience in Uzbekistan will lead to significant positive results.

The "University 3.0" model – stages of development of higher education institutions:

- **Model 1.0:** Education only (teaching).
- **Model 2.0:** Education + scientific research.
- **Model 3.0:** Education + science + commercialization [7].

In other words, the university does not only teach but also generates revenue from its scientific developments and contributes directly to the economy. One of the key features of Japan's higher education system is its well-established quality assurance mechanisms. According to the Japanese scholar I. Amano, modern universities play a crucial role in developing human capital, which is a key driver of economic growth, commercializing scientific research, and fostering an innovation ecosystem [8].

Conclusion.

Research shows that in both countries, higher education is transitioning from the classical "knowledge dissemination" model to the "Third Generation University" model. The experience of both nations confirms that granting financial and academic autonomy to higher education institutions, along with a reduction in direct state control, significantly increases innovative activity. Today, Uzbekistan is also implementing large-scale reforms aimed at aligning its higher education system with international standards. These reforms include expanding the academic and financial autonomy of universities, introducing the credit-module system, strengthening the integration of science and industry, and promoting participation in international university rankings as key priorities. In many respects, these reforms are consistent with Japan's experience in the modernization of higher education. The transition from centralized management to a self-financing system fosters adaptability to market conditions within universities. In conclusion, the central idea of this article is that the primary goal is to transition Uzbekistan's higher education system to the "University 3.0" model, which brings real benefits to the national economy. It is advisable to direct grants not only toward social protection but also toward social productivity, to establish joint research centers between universities and large industrial clusters, and to cultivate critical thinking skills rather than just providing knowledge to university graduates in the era of artificial intelligence and automation.

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