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TA'LIM

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CLUSTER APPROACH AS A TOOL FOR MODERNIZATION: CONTEXT OF THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION IN UZBEKISTAN

ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the study of the experience of clustering of education in the Republic of Uzbekistan and abroad. The main purpose of the article is to consider the problem of modernization of the education system in the Republic of Uzbekistan from the point of view of the cluster approach and the experience of foreign countries, with some emphasis on the field of teaching foreign languages. The theoretical provisions and results of this study are based on general scientific and special methodological approaches: a systematic approach, methods of expert and logical analysis. In solving some tasks, content analysis of scientific literature, as well as statistical methods of data analysis were used. The author of the article tries to show that the modernization of the education system in the Republic of Uzbekistan requires first a deep study of scientific approaches to such a phenomenon as a "cluster" in foreign countries. Particular attention should be paid to the study of the cluster approach within the framework of the new concept of competitiveness, considering the possibility of creating qualitatively new integrated structures in the field of education. It is revealed that the participation of educational institutions in cluster programs abroad is aimed at the implementation of the innovation and investment component and at the practical integration of the education system into clusters. Despite the fact that the cluster approach is already actively used in relation to some of the leading sectors of the Uzbek economy, clustering processes in the field of education are in their infancy. At the same time, the author, analyzing the

foreign experience of developed and developing countries, comes to the conclusion that it is the cluster approach in the field of education that will increase the level of competitiveness of educational institutions in our country.

Keywords: cluster; modernization; education system; cluster approach; innovation; competitiveness.

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KLASTERLI YONDASHUV MODERNIZATSIYA VOSITASI SIFATIDA: O'ZBEKISTON RESPUBLIKASI TA'LIM TIZIMI KONTEKSTI

ANNOTATSIYA

Maqola O'zbekiston Respublikasi va chet ellarda ta'lim sohasini klasterlash tajribasini o'rganishga bag'ishlangan. Maqolaning asosiy maqsadi O'zbekiston Respublikasida ta'lim tizimini modernizatsiya qilish muammosini xorijiy mamlakatlarning klasterli yondashuvi va tajribasi nuqtai nazaridan ko'rib chiqish, chet tillarini o'qitish sohasiga biroz urg'u berishdir. Ushbu tadqiqotning nazariy qoidalari va natijalari umumiy ilmiy va maxsus uslubiy yondashuvlarga asoslanadi: tizimli yondashuv, ekspert va mantiqiy tahlil usullari. Ba'zi muammolarni hal qilishda ilmiy adabiyotlarning tarkibiy tahlili, shuningdek ma'lumotlarni tahlil qilishning statistik usullari ishlatilgan. Maqola muallifi O'zbekiston Respublikasida ta'lim tizimini modernizatsiya qilish avvalo xorijiy mamlakatlardagi "klaster" kabi jarayoniga ilmiy yondashuvlarni chuqur o'rganishni talab qilishini ko'rsatishga harakat qilmoqda. Shu bilan birga, ta'lim sohasida sifat jihatidan yangi integratsiyalashgan tuzilmalarni yaratish imkoniyatini ko'rib chiqadigan raqobatbardoshlikning yangi kontseptsiyasi doirasida Klaster yondashuvini o'rganishga alohida e'tibor qaratish lozim. Ta'lim muassasalarining xorijdagi Klaster dasturlarida ishtirok etishi innovatsion va investitsiya komponentini amalga oshirishga hamda ta'lim tizimini klasterlarga amaliy integratsiyalashga qaratilganligi aniqlandi. Klaster yondashuvi O'zbekiston iqtisodiyotining ayrim yetakchi tarmoqlariga nisbatan faol qo'llanilayotganiga qaramay, ta'lim sohasida klasterlash jarayonlari boshlang'ich bosqichida. Shu bilan birga, muallif rivojlangan va rivojlanayotgan mamlakatlarning xorijiy tajribasini tahlil qilib, aynan ta'lim sohasidagi Klaster yondashuvi mamlakatimizda ta'lim muassasalarining raqobatbardoshligini oshiradi degan xulosaga keladi.

Kalit so'zlar: klaster; modernizatsiya; ta'lim tizimi; klaster yondashuvi; innovatsiya; raqobatbardoshlik.

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КЛАСТЕРНЫЙ ПОДХОД КАК ИНСТРУМЕНТ МОДЕРНИЗАЦИИ: КОНТЕКСТ СИСТЕМЫ ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ РЕСПУБЛИКИ УЗБЕКИСТАН

АННОТАЦИЯ

Статья посвящена изучению опыта кластеризации сферы образования в Республике Узбекистан и за рубежом. Основная цель статьи заключается в рассмотрении проблемы модернизации системы образования в Республике Узбекистан с точки зрения кластерного подхода и опыта зарубежных стран, с некоторым ударением в сторону сферы обучения иностранным языкам. Теоретические положения и результаты данного исследования основаны на общенаучных и специальных методических подходах: системном подходе, методах экспертного и логического анализа. При решении некоторых задач были использованы контент-анализ научной литературы, а также статистические методы анализа данных. Автор статьи пытается показать, что модернизация системы образования в Республике Узбекистан требует сначала глубокого изучения научных подходов к такому явлению, как «кластер» в зарубежных странах. Особое внимание при этом следует уделить изучению кластерного подхода в рамках новой концепции конкурентоспособности, рассматривающей возможность создания качественно новых интегрированных структур в сфере образования. Выявлено, что участие образовательных учреждений в кластерных программах за рубежом направлено на реализацию инновационной и инвестиционной составляющей и на практическую интеграцию системы образования в кластеры. Несмотря на то, что кластерный подход уже активно используется в отношении некоторых ведущих отраслей узбекской экономики, в сфере образования процессы кластеризации находятся в зачаточном состоянии. При этом автор, анализируя зарубежный опыт развитых и развивающихся стран, приходит к выводу о том, что именно кластерный подход в сфере образования позволит повысить уровень конкурентоспособности учебных заведений в нашей стране.

Ключевые слова: кластер; модернизация; система образования; кластерный подход; инновация; конкурентоспособность.

Introduction. Currently, the education system in the Republic of Uzbekistan is undergoing a number of significant transformations: the classical academic approach is being rethought from the standpoint of introducing new methods of teaching future specialists. The integrative model of education is an effective

alternative to classical academic education, while the practice of a number of foreign countries shows its high efficiency. In particular, this model has been successfully applied in Switzerland over the past years, while the strongest side of the Swiss higher education system is precisely the practical orientation achieved within the framework of the integrative learning model [1, 3]. The integrative model of training specialists of higher educational institutions allows taking into account the peculiarities of the national internal labor market of the country in which students are studying, which in the future can contribute to building the potential of an innovative nature in a cluster format. A distinctive feature of the educational cluster is its innovative focus. For some time, the cluster approach has been used in solving a certain number of tasks and goals, namely, as a fundamental basis for vigorous activity. The most effective educational clusters are formed and developed where self-realization takes place or growth is planned in areas such as engineering and technology, followed by access to "market relations" [2, 87]. The cluster form of organization leads to the creation of a special form of innovation - "total innovative product".

Literature review. In their works, the term "educational cluster" was studied by: the concept of lifelong education (G.V. Mukhametzyanova, A.M. Novikov); theory of activity and pedagogical design (G.I. Ibragimov, M.I. Makhmutov); studies revealing the problems of social partnership and education quality management in a vocational school (Yu.F. Schubert, E.A. Korchagina, A.S. Subetto); the study of educational services (A.I. Kovalenko, S.A. Belyakov, M.M. Butakova, M. Balaeva); cluster approach in vocational education (N.B. Pugacheva, A.V. Leontiev); regional aspects of the development of the higher education system (I.A. Maiburov, L.G. Milyaeva, A.Yu. Rykun, S.B. Smirnov); market research of educational services (A.A. Avetisov, I.S. Berezin, Sh.Z. Valiev, S.I. Nemtsov, V.V. Stepanova).

Analysis of Foreign Experience in Using Cluster Approach. A cluster in the educational process is interpreted as "initiatives and projects for the development of education, which included many schools around which stable support from the external environment has formed (or is being formed"), which is characteristic of a separate geographical and economic area.

In Japan, the cluster approach is widely used in the training of specialists in the field of computer technology, medicine, public administration and top management, while monitoring the labor market and working closely with private and public cluster member firms [4, 101].

In the programs of British universities, the cluster approach has also received a fairly strong development [7, 20]: the methods of integrating several subject areas in the study of each discipline make it possible to train qualified specialists in the field of public administration, a number of technical specialties in the extractive industry, etc., which helps to build up a competitive and innovative potential in already existing economic clusters. In turn, the cluster model of educational

management implies an integrative approach to teaching university specialists, while requiring special training for teaching staff [10, 74].

Thus, foreign practice shows that clustering the education sector is possible only on the basis of an integrative model of training specialists, which allows taking into account the characteristics of the labor market and the socio-economic needs of a particular country, as well as firmly linking the theoretical developments of educational institutions with the professional practice of graduates.

The analysis of the scientific literature showed that most of the modern foreign studies of clustering problems are focused exclusively on the United States and European countries and are based on their understanding of the concept of clusters, which explains their leadership in terms of the effectiveness of applying the cluster approach in the field of education and the number of formed clusters, the active participants of which are educational institutions.

The context of the education system of the Republic of Uzbekistan. In this context, it is necessary to identify the main problems of introducing the cluster model into the education system of the Republic of Uzbekistan, since the modern specialists of our country are also becoming more and more famous all over the world for their fundamental theoretical training, however, according to some studies, in our conditions, 60% of the knowledge of graduates is not used further by them in practice or in professional activity.

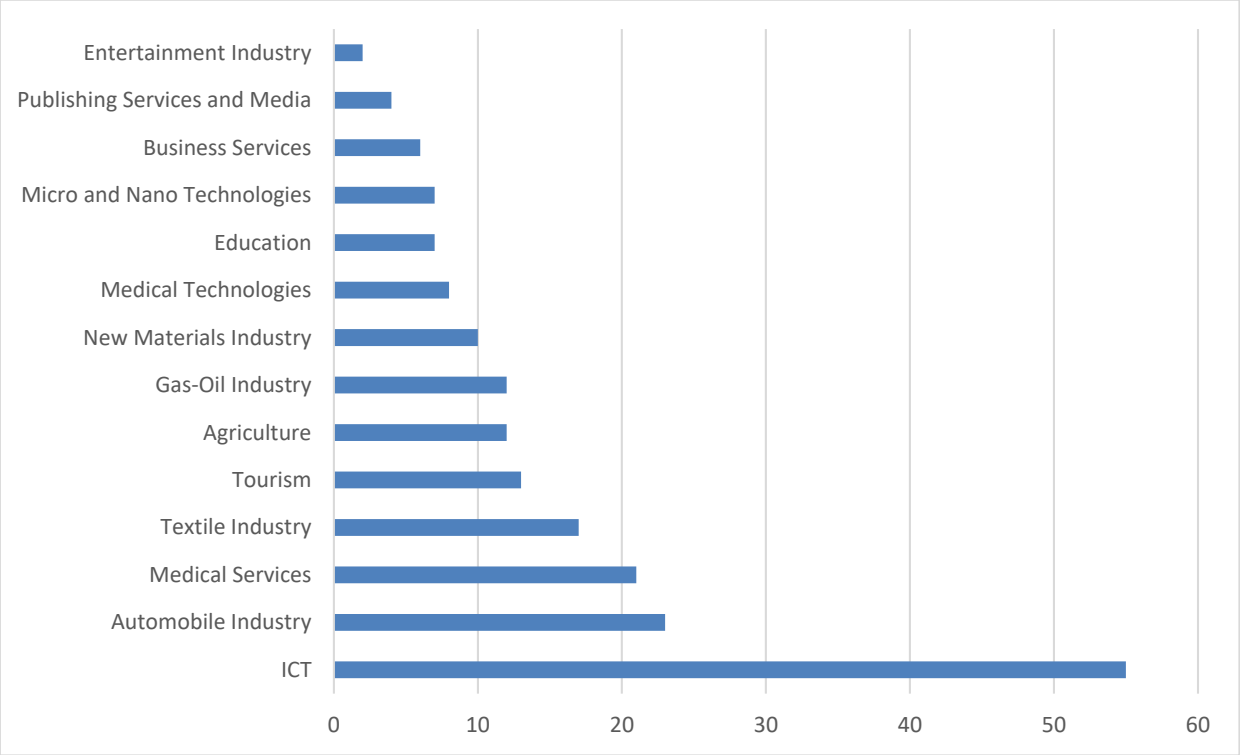

Figure 1. Cluster Index in EU countries [3]

That is, there is an imbalance between the broad theoretical training of a specialist and the possibilities for the practical application of this knowledge in subsequent professional activities, precisely because educational institutions are extremely poorly involved in the processes of regional clustering [5, 69]. This problem requires special study, since without a revision of the very concept of the education system and without its orientation towards practical professional activity, the significant competitiveness of local specialists in most practical areas becomes impossible. In order to revise the model of education, in our opinion, it is necessary to study the foreign experience of clustering in this area.

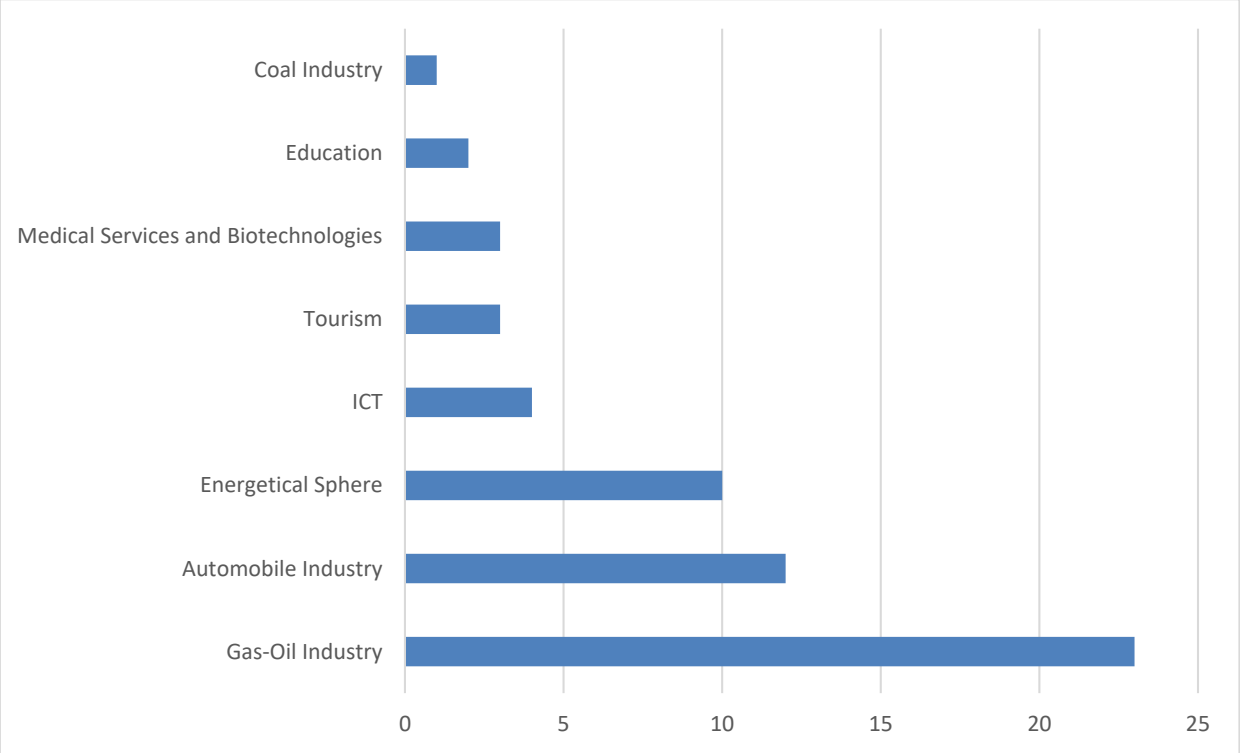

Figure 2. Cluster Index in Uzbekistan [13]

The clustering index of the education sector, as seen in Figure 2, is still quite low compared to the indicators of the EU countries, so it seems necessary to assess the education sector taking into account the requirements of the labor market and international standards. However, it should be noted that despite a significant decrease in the level of competition among applicants in the field of higher education in Uzbekistan, the rating of most universities in the country in 2022 has increased significantly, even compared to 2021.

From the standpoint of our study, it should be noted that in most generally accepted world rankings, the group of technical and natural science universities has become the most numerous. These are the higher educational institutions that use one of the elements of the integrative model of student learning: the project method,

due to which these educational institutions actively participate in cluster projects. Ranking statistics data presented by such well-known rating systems as THE, QS or ARWU reveal one of the negative trends in the higher education system of the Republic of Uzbekistan: humanitarian universities occupy low positions both in last year's ranking and in the rankings of 2022 [6, 122]. This may mean a certain lack of demand for specialists in the humanities in the processes of economic clustering in our country. This directly concerns

The problem is also that the needs of the labor market are determined by the peculiarities of the development of the territory of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The traditional activity of higher education has always been focused on the overall economics of the processes operating in the industry. The profile of the industry of educational institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan is focused on the personnel of specific sectors of the economy. This situation, according to some analysts [12, 4], has led to a number of contradictions between separate parts of the system of vocational and higher education.

In connection with the identified problems, it seems necessary to consider in more detail the foreign experience of clustering in the field of education.

The first difference from the experience of our country is that most European countries, like the United States, implement a cluster policy in the field of education with the help of special cluster programs (20 out of 29 countries of the European Union [3]). In other countries, individual approaches are applied, including specific EU programs. Some countries provide cluster support to educational institutions within one specific program (Germany, Spain, Austria, France), while others have different support programs with specific goals (Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia) [3]. Most cluster programs are aimed at solving various problems, but some countries implement programs focusing on one specific goal.

The second difference lies in the scale of support for American and European educational clusters: the highest budgets are registered in France, Hungary and Great Britain [3]. Cluster programs and cluster organizations in the field of education in most cases are financed from various sources, but public funding plays a decisive role [8, 92].

The analysis of the specialized literature showed that most European countries are turning to clusters in developing areas, often supporting mature clusters in parallel.

As a rule, cluster programs in the field of education are addressed to cluster organizations and/or other private and public entities (business, research institutes, consulting associations).

Cluster programs in the field of education, built into the specific conditions of the economic management of each country, are implemented by a wide range of participants [9, 19]. Cluster education organizations are often invited to participate in government competitions, and the range of stakeholders and annual budgets vary in scope. Among the aspects that were rated as very important to support the further

development of educational clusters, according to the latest study of the European Observatory for Clusters, is the development of skills, human resources and training, with the mandatory provision of information on the search for partners and funding for research and development [3].

It is interesting to note the relative importance of the internationalization of support for educational clusters, in contrast to the main advantages inherent in clusters in terms of spatial proximity. This shows that successful educational clusters are characterized by a coincidence of spatial proximity and connectedness with partners. For example, the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan has introduced a special internationalization measure as a follow-up support program for advanced clusters identified through competitive selection. Based on the experience of advanced countries, it can be argued that there is a need for active state support for thoughtful and planned programs aimed at integrating higher education institutions into innovative high-tech clusters.

Discussion. The goal of each educational institution is to provide each student with the baggage of knowledge, skills and abilities that every graduate of a school, college, lyceum and university should have. But to date, this approach is insufficient [11, 43]. Today, modern society needs sufficiently competent, educated graduates who are ready for further life in a certain area, who have certain professional skills to solve certain problems.

Instead of an interconnected ecosystem, there is a series of unrelated processes that do not support each other. Research in the field of academic science is not related to practical implementation. High development costs and limited investment funding hinder the commercialization of solutions. The closed nature of data collection processes hinders the deployment of new tools and approaches. Lack of infrastructure and data-driven improvements hinders uptake. All of this is especially frustrating at a time when advances in technology and digital media have the potential to dramatically change how we approach learning, evaluating and using data. An intelligent, integrated innovation ecosystem that connects different partners in a continuous and interactive design process can help remove barriers to innovation

The prerequisites for a new stage in the development of educational clusters are:

- changes taking place in the innovation systems of the world;
- educational strategies adopted by a number of states to remain competitive;
- roadmaps for the development of education systems;
- social changes taking place in the world;
- the success of the clusters themselves, which are known to have some immunity from various economic crises.

Obviously, cluster development mechanisms are extremely attractive for the education sector, but without a clear understanding of how these mechanisms work, how they can be used to develop education, and what is the product of the cluster activity in this area, it is extremely difficult to unify the work.

Conclusions. The study made it possible to draw the following conclusions. Important distinguishing characteristics of the formation of educational clusters in foreign countries are 1) the creation of conditions for the training of specialists with different levels of professional education; 2) integration of education with science and production; 3) increasing the prestige of highly qualified professions. Interest in the cluster approach in the field of education is also determined by the large-scale positive experience of clustering the educational sphere in many countries (USA, Italy, Great Britain, Canada, France, Germany, etc.), which has proven the effectiveness of using cluster structures to increase the competitiveness of educational institutions in practice. In the Republic of Uzbekistan, the level of clustering of the education sector is currently insufficient, the clustering index of this sphere is quite low. Due to the above problems of education, it is necessary to radically change the approach not only to state support and its format, but also to the training of specialists as future participants in the labor market, since it is not possible to obtain a highly qualified labor resource without integrated training. It is necessary to make the education sector economically attractive for participation in cluster programs of small and medium-sized businesses; in addition to the participation of the state, to attract venture investments on the basis of state guarantees. Thus, the issues of clustering the education sector in the Republic of Uzbekistan require the comprehensive participation of both the educational institutions themselves and business structures, government agencies - primarily the relevant ministries.

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