

**BALANCING TRADITIONAL AND MODERN TEACHING METHODS IN THE
ELEMENTARY CLASSROOMS**

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Abstract: This article examines the balance between traditional and modern teaching methods in elementary classrooms in Uzbekistan. Through a review of existing literature and analysis of survey data from Uzbek teachers, the study finds that while modern student-centered approaches are being increasingly adopted, traditional teacher-centered methods still predominate, especially in rural areas. The article discusses the factors influencing teaching styles and the challenges of shifting pedagogical approaches in the Uzbek context. It concludes that a gradual, hybrid approach blending old and new methods may be most appropriate for Uzbekistan's elementary schools.

Keywords: Uzbekistan, elementary education, pedagogy, teaching methods, educational reform

Annotatsiya: Ushbu maqolada O'zbekistonda boshlang'ich sinflarda o'qitishning an'anaviy va zamonaviy usullari o'rtasidagi muvozanat muhokama qilinadi. Mavjud adabiyotlarni ko'rib chiqish va o'zbek o'qituvchilarining so'rovlari ma'lumotlarini tahlil qilish asosida tadqiqot shuni ko'rsatadiki, o'qituvchilarga yo'naltirilgan zamonaviy yondashuvlar tobora ko'proq qo'llanilayotgan bo'lsa-da, o'qituvchilarga yo'naltirilgan an'anaviy usullar, ayniqsa qishloq joylarda hali ham keng tarqalgan. Maqolada O'zbekiston sharoitida o'qitish uslublariga ta'sir etuvchi omillar va pedagogik yondashuvlarning o'zgarishi bilan bog'liq muammolar ko'rib chiqiladi. U eski va yangi usullarni birlashtirgan bosqichma-bosqich gibridd yondashuv O'zbekiston boshlang'ich maktablari uchun eng mos bo'lishi mumkin degan xulosaga keladi.

Kalit so'zlar: O'zbekiston, boshlang'ich ta'lim, pedagogika, o'qitish usullari, ta'lim islohoti

Аннотация: В данной статье рассматривается баланс между традиционными и современными методами обучения в начальных классах в Узбекистане. На основе обзора существующей литературы и анализа данных опросов узбекских учителей в исследовании делается вывод о том, что, хотя современные подходы, ориентированные на учащихся, находят все более широкое применение, традиционные методы, ориентированные на учителей, по-прежнему преобладают, особенно в сельской местности. В статье рассматриваются факторы, влияющие на стили преподавания, и проблемы, связанные с изменением педагогических подходов в условиях Узбекистана. В нем делается вывод о том, что постепенный гибридный подход, сочетающий старые и новые методы, может быть наиболее подходящим для начальных школ Узбекистана.

Ключевые слова: Узбекистан, начальное образование, педагогика, методы обучения, образовательная реформа

INTRODUCTION

Since gaining independence in 1991, Uzbekistan has embarked on reforms to modernize its education system, including adopting new curricula and pedagogical approaches. In elementary classrooms, this has meant a shift from traditional teacher-centered instruction to more modern student-centered methods [1]. However, this transition has been gradual and uneven, with

significant differences between urban and rural schools. Balancing traditional and modern teaching presents challenges in the Uzbek context, including resource constraints, entrenched practices, and varying cultural attitudes toward education [2][3]. This article examines the current state of elementary teaching methods in Uzbekistan and analyzes the factors shaping the mix of traditional and modern approaches being used.

METHODS AND LITERATURE REVIEW

To assess the balance of teaching methods, a comprehensive literature review was first conducted. Uzbek and international sources were consulted, including government reports, academic studies, and NGO assessments. Key search terms included "Uzbekistan education," "teaching methods," and "elementary schools." The review aimed to establish the historical context and latest research on pedagogical practices in Uzbekistan [2][4][5].

Additionally, an online survey of Uzbek public elementary school teachers was conducted to gather current data. The survey contained 25 questions on teaching methods, attitudes, and challenges. 40 teachers from different regions participated. Respondents were recruited via education ministry contacts and teacher associations. The survey provided a snapshot of practices and views across the country [6].

RESULTS

The literature review found that for most of the Soviet era and 1990s, Uzbek elementary classrooms were characterized by traditional teaching with rote learning, lectures, and a central authoritative role for teachers [4][5]. Textbooks, curricula and instructional methods were highly standardized. Classrooms were disciplined and teacher-directed [3][7].

Since the 2000s, the government has introduced reforms to modernize teaching, including new curricula focused on skills over memorization, more interactive methods, and technology use [1][6]. UNESCO, UNICEF and other international agencies have supported training programs for teachers to adopt modern approaches [2][4].

However, traditional methods still predominate, especially in rural areas with fewer resources and more conservative attitudes [5][8]. The survey found that over 75% of teachers use lectures and recitation as their main instructional methods. Only 40% regularly use interactive activities like group work, projects or discussions.

Teachers cited lack of resources, large class sizes, and pressure to cover standardized content as barriers to adopting new methods. In rural schools, teachers had less training in modern approaches. Many also felt parental and community expectations were better met through traditional teaching.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The findings suggest that Uzbekistan's elementary education system is in transition, with modern methods increasingly promoted but not yet predominant. The balance between old and new approaches varies considerably between regions and individual schools.

Several key factors appear to be influencing the pace and unevenness of pedagogical change. First, resource constraints limit the spread of new methods, which often require different textbooks, technology and classroom setups [3][7]. Second, the centralized, standardized nature of the education system means that deviating from established practices takes concerted effort [1][4].

Third, cultural attitudes valuing discipline and teacher authority make student-centered methods seem like a radical shift in some communities [2][8].

However, the government's continued focus on modernizing teaching and generational change will likely accelerate the trend toward new methods. Younger teachers seem more receptive to changing approaches. Targeted training in modern practices is increasing, especially as international partnerships support education reforms [2][4].

Most importantly, evidence is growing that integrating new methods can enhance learning outcomes, without totally displacing traditional ones [1][8]. A balanced, hybrid approach may be most feasible and effective in the Uzbek context. Gradual introduction of new practices like group work and discussions, combined with familiar methods like recitation and memorization, can expand teachers' repertoire and students' skills [3][5][7].

CONCLUSIONS

Uzbekistan's elementary education system is gradually shifting from traditional to modern teaching methods, but still relies predominantly on conventional teacher-centered instruction, particularly in rural areas. Resource limitations, systemic constraints, and cultural factors have slowed the adoption of new student-centered approaches. However, the government's continued emphasis on modernizing teaching is likely to accelerate change, especially as international support and evidence of improved learning outcomes grows. Rather than a rapid, wholesale shift, the most appropriate path may be a gradual incorporation of new methods alongside trusted traditional ones. With a balanced, localized approach, Uzbekistan can enhance elementary teaching and learning while preserving cultural values.

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