

THE CURRENT STATE AND TRENDS IN DEVELOPING THE MANAGERIAL POTENTIAL OF FEMALE STUDENTS IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

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Abstract: This article analyzes the process of preparing female students studying at higher education institutions for managerial activities, as well as the current state and development trends of this process. Within the framework of state policy aimed at increasing women's access to education, social activity, and participation in leadership positions in Uzbekistan, the reforms being implemented are highlighted. In addition, based on statistical data, the article reveals the share of women in the education system, bachelor's and master's degree programs that contribute to preparing women for leadership roles, and the existing opportunities in this field.

Keywords: higher education, management, female students, leadership potential, gender equality, education system, management.

In higher education institutions, the educational and pedagogical foundations for preparing female students for leadership positions exist in certain specialties. In particular, bachelor's degree programs such as *School Management* are directly aimed at training managerial personnel for educational institutions. Leadership training is also provided within public administration and management programs in the fields of law and economics, taking into account sector-specific requirements. Each field has its own foundations, conditions, infrastructure, and opportunities for training managerial staff. Therefore, it is advisable to approach the process of preparing female students for leadership positions in higher education institutions by considering the specific characteristics of each sector.

Today, women's social activity in society is changing significantly. According to statistical data, the share of women employed in the education sector is 75%; in healthcare and social services – 76.2%; in agriculture and construction – 32.2%; in industry, trade, and services – 40.7%; in finance and insurance – 37.5%; and in other sectors – 34.5%. This analysis shows that women are most actively employed in healthcare, services, and education. In other sectors—such as agriculture, industry, trade, finance, and insurance—the indicators remain below the average level (32–40%). First of all, priority should be given to training female leaders for sectors where women's participation is high. This is because the proportion of women in leadership positions is relatively higher in education and healthcare. Based on this, the study analyzes the share of women in the higher education sector.

One of the main directions of social reforms in Uzbekistan is creating favorable living, studying, and working conditions for women. This can be justified by the conditions being created in higher education institutions. As of January 1, 2022, there are 151 higher education institutions in the country, including 104 state-owned institutions and 47 non-state and foreign higher education institutions and their branches.

Measures to create the necessary conditions for women's access to education in the higher and secondary specialized education system include the following. Based on Resolution No. 585 dated September 17, 2021, "*On Measures to Provide Financial Support for Higher Education of Needy Girls Who Have Lost One or Both Parents and Single Women Without a Breadwinner*", tuition fees under the basic contract system were covered for 1,431 girls. These included needy



girls who had lost one or both parents and single women without a breadwinner who were admitted to state higher education institutions. The payments were made at the expense of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan, regional administrations, and the Tashkent city administration.

At present, women account for 41% of the employees working within the system of the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education. In particular, the system currently includes 879 Doctors of Science, 2,208 Doctors of Philosophy (PhD), 833 professors, and 2,024 associate professors among women who are actively engaged in academic and professional activities. This represents a very significant potential and clearly indicates the high proportion of women in the higher education system. It should be especially noted that during the period 2017–2021, the number of women defending scientific dissertations increased substantially.

It should also be emphasized that the participation of women in the management of higher education institutions is considerable. Specifically, women currently hold leadership positions as 4 rectors, 56 vice-rectors (deputy directors), and 199 faculty deans and deputy deans. These figures are increasing year by year, which can be explained by the growing level of trust in women within the higher education management process.

By Resolution No. 605 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated September 24, 2021, the Regulation on covering part of the monthly rental payments for students residing in rented accommodation at state higher education institutions from the State Budget was approved. According to this resolution, during the 2021–2022 academic year, part of the rental payments was covered for 1,940 female students.

In recent years, in order to support socially vulnerable youth, additional admission quotas based on special state grants have been allocated for their enrollment in higher education institutions across the republic. In accordance with Resolution No. 402 of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated June 23, 2020, 940 additional state-funded places were allocated specifically for female students for the 2020–2021 academic year.

Currently, the total number of female students studying at higher education institutions in the republic amounts to 365,000, which represents 47% of the total student population. Among them, 117,955 are married, and 110,988 combine their studies with employment during their free time. At present, women constitute 41% of the workforce employed within the system of the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education. A special scholarship is paid monthly to female students in addition to the standard scholarship provided under general conditions at higher education institutions. The recipients of this scholarship are determined by the scholarship commissions of higher education institutions based on established criteria.

The proportion of students enrolled in higher education institutions demonstrates a steady increase in female participation. In 2017, female students accounted for 41%, while male students comprised 59%. By 2021, the share of female students rose to 47%, with male students accounting for 53%. During the 2020–2021 academic year, nearly 90,000 female students were admitted to higher education institutions. Separate admission quotas based on special state grants were allocated specifically for girls, resulting in 945 female students from low-income families being admitted to higher education institutions on a state-funded basis. From the 2021–2022 academic year, the number of state grants allocated for girls from socially vulnerable families was doubled.



At the same time, the education sector is one of the key branches of the economy of Uzbekistan, in which the share of employed women is approximately twice as high as the proportion of women employed in the overall economy. Regarding the ratio of women and men employed in educational management bodies, women demonstrate an advantage of more than four times, and this gap continues to widen steadily.

In the 2021–2022 academic year, higher education institutions admitted students to bachelor's degree programs oriented toward management and leadership across various sectors. Specifically, 1,700 students were admitted to full-time programs, 275 students to part-time programs, and 50 students to evening programs. Similarly, 247 students were admitted to relevant master's degree programs. In total, this amounts to 2,272 students, covering management fields across all sectors of the economy, including tourism, education, healthcare, cultural heritage, and other areas.

During the course of this study, the share of women in pedagogical higher education institutions and the current state of training female managerial personnel were examined in detail. Four pedagogical institutes were selected as the objects of the study. In particular, the Navoi, Kokand, Tashkent, and Chirchik State Pedagogical Institutes provided the relevant data.

At Navoi State Pedagogical Institute, the total number of academic staff amounts to 574, of whom 240 are men and 334 are women, with women accounting for 58% of the teaching staff. The total number of students enrolled at the institute is 18,615, of whom 13,360 are female students, representing 71.7% of the total student population.

In the *School Management* bachelor's degree program, a total of 179 students are enrolled, of whom 77 students (43%) are female. In the *Management of Educational Institutions* master's degree program, the total number of students is 34, among whom 25 are female students, accounting for 73.5%.

Kokand State Pedagogical Institute

Currently, a total of 526 academic staff members are employed at Kokand State Pedagogical Institute, of whom 316 are women. The total number of students studying at the institute is 14,700, including 11,546 female students.

In the *School Management* bachelor's degree program, there are 129 students, of whom 48 are female students.

As can be seen from the above analysis, Tashkent State Pedagogical University named after Nizami is the largest higher education institution in terms of the number of students and, accordingly, has the highest number of female students. In terms of the composition of academic staff, Navoi State Pedagogical Institute holds a leading position.

In the process of preparing students for leadership positions directly within educational institutions, the *School Management* program plays a significant role. In this field, Tashkent State Pedagogical University named after Nizami demonstrates leadership. The institution that trains the largest number of specialists is Kokand State Pedagogical Institute. Meanwhile, in the master's program *Management of Educational Institutions*, the largest number of specialists is trained at Chirchik State Pedagogical Institute, whereas the lowest indicator is observed at Tashkent State Pedagogical University named after Nizami.

Why is it necessary to prepare female students for leadership positions specifically in pedagogical higher education institutions? This is because today women occupy a special place



in the management processes of general secondary schools. Using the example of Jizzakh and Syrdarya regions, we analyzed the share of women among school principals and deputy principals. In Jizzakh region, there are a total of 571 educational institutions, including 550 schools (538 general schools, 12 specialized schools and boarding schools, and 4 special schools), 14 “Barkamol Avlod” children’s centers, one orphanage, and one regional professional development center.

In conclusion, since the share of women in education, healthcare, and service sectors in Uzbekistan is significantly higher than in other sectors, it is particularly important to study the proportion of women leaders and the system of personnel training in these areas. The share of women in the higher education system is also high. Along with the increasing number of female researchers and academic staff, the representation of women in leadership positions within this system is also steadily growing, as demonstrated by the examples above.

Female students are being trained in management-related bachelor’s and master’s degree programs at educational institutions. In particular, pedagogical higher education institutions provide leadership training through the *School Management* and *Management of Educational Institutions* programs. It can be observed that in these fields, female students are being trained alongside male students.

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