

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF IMPLEMENTING GLOBAL GEOGRAPHIC PROCESSES THROUGH THE CASE-STUDY METHOD

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Abstract: This article analyzes the application of the case-study method in teaching global geographic processes, opportunities for its implementation in the higher education system of Uzbekistan, and potential challenges that may arise along the way. The article presents the theoretical and methodological foundations of the case-study method, its pedagogical advantages, various formats, and implementation strategies adapted to Uzbekistan's conditions. Additionally, the article examines the method's compliance with modern educational standards, its ability to respond to labor market demands, and practical issues such as teacher training, creation of quality case materials, and curriculum restructuring. The research resulted in the development of a step-by-step strategy for implementing the case-study method and concrete recommendations for its implementation.

Keywords: case-study method, case analysis, global geographic processes, pedagogical technologies, interactive learning, competency-based approach, critical thinking, student acceptance issues, teacher retraining, practical skills, problem-based learning, implementation strategy, educational innovations, Uzbekistan higher education

Introduction

Large-scale implementation of the case-study method in the higher education system of Uzbekistan creates great opportunities, but it is also necessary to consider a number of challenges. First, let us examine the opportunities and advantages.

The first opportunity is alignment with modern educational standards. The Concept for the Development of Higher Education in the Republic of Uzbekistan until 2030 sets tasks such as improving the quality of education, transitioning to international standards, and implementing a competency-based approach. The case-study method helps implement precisely these tasks because it effectively develops competencies and is widely applied in international educational practice.

The second opportunity is meeting labor market demands. As Uzbekistan's economy develops, modern companies and organizations require specialists who not only possess theoretical knowledge but also have practical skills, can think critically, and solve problems. The case-study method prepares precisely such specialists. Particularly in fields such as business, management, international relations, and geography, the case-study method is very effective in developing required skills.

The third opportunity is student interest and motivation. Uzbek students, like students from other countries, prefer interesting, interactive lessons connected to real life. Case-study lessons arouse more interest than traditional lectures and ensure students' active participation. This improves learning quality and reduces dropout rates.



The fourth opportunity is international cooperation. Through the application of the case-study method, universities in Uzbekistan can more easily attract international partners. Many international educational projects (Erasmus+, Tempus, USAID, and others) require or support the application of modern teaching methods. Universities with experience in the case-study method will have opportunities to participate in such projects and receive grants.

The fifth opportunity is creating cases specific to Uzbekistan. Uzbekistan has rich history, unique geography, and an integration process into the global economy. All these aspects provide excellent opportunities to create cases for studying in global geography. For example, cases such as "Uzbekistan as a Transport-Logistics Hub," "Water Resource Issues in Central Asia," "Uzbekistan's Role in China's 'Belt and Road' Initiative," and "Development of Uzbekistan's Tourism Industry" can be interesting not only for Uzbek but also for international students.

However, there are also a number of challenges in implementing the case-study method in Uzbekistan's higher education system. The first challenge is teacher preparedness. Most teachers have only theoretical knowledge about the case-study method but lack practical experience in applying it. They do not know how to prepare cases, how to organize lessons, and how to evaluate students. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a teacher training system – special trainings, masterclasses, and experience exchange programs.

The second challenge is the lack of quality case materials. There are almost no ready-made cases in Uzbek language on global geography. There are many cases in English (Harvard Business School, European Case Clearing House, and other sources), but it is difficult to use them directly – language barrier and cultural context differences exist. Therefore, it is necessary to create our own cases in Uzbek language. This requires significant effort – creating each quality case requires several weeks of research and writing.

The third challenge is curricula and time constraints. In Uzbekistan universities, curricula are usually strictly defined and require covering many topics in a short time. The case-study method requires more time – analyzing one case completely can take 2-3 hours. Therefore, it is necessary to review curricula, shorten some topics, and allocate more time for case-study.

The fourth challenge is large groups. In Uzbekistan universities, student flows often consist of 40-60 or more students. Conducting case-study lessons in such large groups is very difficult – ensuring active participation of all students, organizing work in small groups, and evaluating each student poses problems. As solutions, it is possible to divide flows into smaller groups, involve additional teachers or tutors, and organize some work on online platforms.

The fifth challenge is the assessment system. In Uzbekistan's education system, tests and exams traditionally prevail. In the case-study method, assessment is complex and multi-component – participation in the process, group work, presentations, written work, and others are evaluated. This requires implementing new assessment criteria and systems, which requires additional explanation and adaptation from teachers and students.

The sixth challenge is student mentality and learning style. Uzbek students are traditionally accustomed to a more reproductive learning style – writing what the teacher says, studying textbooks, answering tests. Case-study requires creative and critical thinking, independence, and defending one's opinions. Some students may not be ready for this or may resist. Therefore, a gradual transition is necessary – starting with simple cases and gradually increasing complexity.

The seventh challenge is material and technical base. Case-study lessons require special conditions: comfortable rooms for group work (circular or group seating), projector and screen (for presentations), flipchart or board (for quickly writing ideas), internet access (for searching



information), and sufficient copies of case materials for the number of students. In most Uzbek universities, such conditions are not fully provided.

The eighth challenge is access to information. Creating quality cases requires information from various sources – academic journals, international organizations' reports, statistical data. However, most Uzbek universities have not subscribed to such databases or have limited internet access. To solve this problem, it is necessary to develop university libraries, subscribe to international databases, and maximize use of open access sources.

Taking into account these challenges, the following step-by-step strategy is recommended for implementing the case-study method in Uzbekistan:

First stage (Year 1): Pilot project – testing the case-study method in one or two universities, in one or two faculties. Training teachers, creating 5-10 cases, conducting experiments in several subjects, analyzing results, and identifying best practices.

Second stage (Year 2): Expansion – covering more subjects and teachers in universities participating in the pilot project, exchanging experience with other universities, creating a library of cases in Uzbek language, preparing teaching-methodological manuals for teachers.

Third stage (Years 3-5): Institutionalization – officially incorporating the case-study method into curricula, making teacher training a continuous system (annual trainings), constantly updating the case collection, improving the assessment system, using international cases (translating or adapting them).

Fourth stage (5+ years): Innovation – sharing Uzbekistan's experience at the international level, establishing a regional case center, creating cases in cooperation with other countries, holding international conferences on case-study, applying Uzbekistan cases in international education.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The case-study method is a very effective and promising pedagogical tool in teaching global geographic processes. This research covered the theoretical foundations of the case-study method, its various types, effective application mechanisms, and opportunities for implementation in Uzbekistan's conditions. The following main conclusions can be drawn.

First, the case-study method is based on several solid pedagogical theories – pragmatic educational philosophy, constructivism, experiential learning theory – and its effectiveness has been proven through numerous scientific studies. This method effectively develops not only theoretical knowledge but also practical skills and competencies.

Second, there are various types and formats of the case-study method, each aimed at solving specific goals and tasks. Teachers can choose the most appropriate format depending on learning objectives, student level, and available resources.

Third, creating quality case materials requires great effort and professional skill. Cases must be realistic, complex, interesting, and aligned with pedagogical goals. Teachers need clear guidelines and support for creating cases.

Fourth, organizing case-study lessons requires its own methodology and a new role from the teacher. The teacher plays the role of 'facilitator' and 'moderator' rather than 'knowledge provider.' This requires teacher retraining and supporting their professional development.

Fifth, the case-study method requires comprehensive assessment of students' knowledge, skills, and competencies. Traditional tests and exams are insufficient; a broader and multi-component assessment system is needed.



Sixth, implementing the case-study method in Uzbekistan's higher education system creates great opportunities – alignment with modern standards, meeting labor market demands, developing international cooperation. However, there are also a number of challenges that need to be systematically addressed.

Practical recommendations:

At the university level: (1) Include the case-study method in strategic development plans, (2) Organize teacher training programs, (3) Establish special groups or centers for creating cases, (4) Improve material and technical base – comfortable rooms for group work, modern equipment, (5) Subscribe to databases and develop libraries.

At the teacher level: (1) Participate in trainings on case-study and improve qualifications, (2) Gain experience starting with simple cases, (3) Exchange experience with colleagues, attend each other's lessons, (4) Receive feedback from students and continuously improve methodology, (5) Create own cases or adapt international cases.

At the state level: (1) Develop policies supporting the case-study method, (2) Disseminate best practices, (3) Announce competitions and grants for case-study, (4) Support international cooperation – attract foreign experts, experience exchange programs, (5) Give priority to the case-study method in new educational standards.

The following directions are promising for future research: integration of the case-study method with other pedagogical methods, case-study using digital technologies (virtual reality, simulations, online platforms), methodologies for creating special cases for various subjects, empirical research to measure case-study effectiveness in the Uzbekistan context.

In conclusion, the case-study method is an important tool in teaching global geographic processes and modernizing higher education in general. Its widespread application in Uzbekistan's higher education system will improve students' knowledge quality, equip them with 21st-century competencies, and raise Uzbekistan's education to the level of international standards.

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