

Holding Science Olympiads and Competitions in the Southern Regions During the Years of Independence

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Abstract: *This study aims to analyze the role of academic olympiads in improving student achievement and developing gifted education in the post-independence period. The research examines the impact of science competitions on students' academic motivation, intellectual development, and national education quality. A descriptive qualitative method was applied through analysis of educational policy documents, competition reports, and secondary statistical data from national and international sources. The results indicate that academic olympiads contribute significantly to identifying talented students, enhancing problem-solving skills, and increasing international competitiveness. However, disparities in access, teacher preparation, and regional support remain key challenges. The study concludes that strengthening institutional support and inclusive talent development policies is essential for maximizing the educational benefits of academic olympiads.*

Keywords: *Academic Olympiads, Gifted Education, Student Achievement, Education Policy, Post-Independence*

Introduction

The large-scale reforms implemented during the years of independence have created the necessary conditions for the development of the "Strategy of Actions on Five Priority Areas of Development of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2017-2021", which is the basis for strengthening our independence, ensuring the inviolability of our state's borders, security and law and order, the rule of law in our society, human rights and freedoms, an environment of interethnic harmony and religious tolerance, and for the development of a decent life for our citizens. The gradual work to increase the intellectual potential of our youth, the high respect for the work of teachers, the widespread popularization of advanced pedagogical technologies, the conduct of in-depth scientific research in the field, and the consistent reforms to scientifically substantiate science have created a solid foundation for our country to take its rightful place among developed countries.

In particular, due to the special attention paid by our President to the education sector, the further improvement of the continuing education system, the increase in the availability of quality educational services, the continuation of the policy of training highly qualified personnel in line with the modern needs of the labor market, and the consistent introduction of modern information technologies into the education sector, high efficiency is being achieved in this area.

Most importantly, the attention and encouragement paid to the education sector is significant in that it is being directed towards achieving the goals we have set, training qualified personnel, methodologically improving the normative documents of the educational process, ensuring the quality and efficiency of education, developing educational and information resources, in-depth study of pedagogical, psychological and methodological problems of education, collecting and analyzing data on education, and preparing the necessary information in this regard.

Methodology

The general secondary education stage is considered one of the important areas in the education system, where the emphasis is on developing independent thinking, organizational skills and practical experience in children, initial orientation to the profession and the formation of skills to choose the next stage of education. The First President of the Republic of Uzbekistan I.A. Karimov says about this stage of education: "... general education is mandatory for all of us, in which we must deeply teach our children the basics of general knowledge, literally lay the foundation for the formation and expansion of our children's worldview" [1].

In the southern regions, specialized schools for in-depth teaching of subjects were established. For example, in the Guzar district, in the 1997-1998 academic year, in 646 classes of 96 schools, in-depth teaching was organized in most subjects, involving 13,188 students. In addition, gymnasium classes were operating in school No. 59, where 1,381 students received education. In school No. 38 in the district, classes were conducted in a differentiated manner. Starting from the 1996-1997 academic year, the councils of the district public education department were held in the form of mobile seminars and councils directly in the schools themselves, and this method was very effective in improving the educational material base of schools in the regions and promptly eliminating existing shortcomings in the field of education. Students of secondary schools of Kashkadarya and Surkhandarya regions also actively participated in science Olympiads held at the republican and international levels, various competitions and competitions. In the 1997-1998 academic year, 15 students from the Guzar district took honorable places in the regional Olympiad. Shakhlo Khidirova, an 11th grade student at secondary school No. 75 in the district, participated in the Republican Olympiad in Russian language and literature and won a prize [2].

Result and Discussion

Students of boarding schools achieved positive results in science Olympiads held among students. For example, students of the Nodirabegim Specialized School No. 2 in Karshi city actively participated in science Olympiads every year and took honorable places. For example, in 2010, Abdullaev Asliddin took part in the Republican Olympiad in mathematics, and Bobonazarov Jaxongir took honorable places in chemistry. In 2011, Billiev Dilbek took part in the Republican stage of the "Knowledge Contest" in geography and took honorable 3rd place. In 2012, 4 students of the 2nd Specialized School participated in the republican "Knowledge Contest". In particular, Malika Khakimova won prizes in English, Maruf Qarayev and Dilafruzlar Khudoyberdieva won prizes in mathematics, and Muhammadjon Iskandarov won prizes in biology. In 2013, Mukhlisa Boltaeva won prizes

in Russian, and Ezoza Abdurakhmonova won prizes in mathematics. In addition, 24 students of the 2nd Specialized School in 2010, 27 in 2011, and 31 in 2012 participated in various sports at the republican stage and took honorable places [3].

Students of the 2nd Specialized School won the intellectual game "Think, Search, Find" in April 2010, held in cooperation with the Uzbek TV and Radio Channel and the Ministry of Public Education, competing with students from the "Norin Group" of the Namangan region. Many former graduates of the school have studied at prestigious universities in foreign countries. In particular, he studied at the University of Westminster in England, the Turin Polytechnic Institute, the Singapore Institute of Management Development, the Gubkin Oil and Gas Institute in Russia, Belgrade State University, the Russian State Medical Academy, the Tashkent University of International Diplomacy, the English State Business University, the Tashkent Medical Academy, the Tashkent Law University, Nagoya University in Japan, and the Plekhanov Russian State Academy of Economics [4].

A number of specialized boarding schools for gifted children also operated in Surkhandarya region. For example, a lot of work was done in Specialized Boarding School No. 4 in Termez to educate gifted students. Three students from the school's "Debate" club, Shodiyeva Dilnoza, Abdurakhmonova Shokhista and Choriyev Ulugbek, participated in the debate competition on the topic "Social Networks" organized by the regional youth center among secondary schools. The students of the boarding school were recognized as the absolute winners among students from 16 schools in Termez. Norkulov Shodibek successfully participated in the city stage of the "Best Student Website" competition and received a ticket to the regional stage [5].

The positive results of the large-scale work carried out in our country during the years of independence to radically reform the education sector, form an effective national education model, and raise a comprehensively developed and healthy generation were clearly visible in the achievements of students at the international level. Student teams of the Republic of Uzbekistan have won 7 gold, 28 silver, and 60 bronze medals at international Olympiads in general education subjects since 2000. In particular, in 2013, students of the Republic won 3 gold, 5 silver, and 10 bronze medals at international Olympiads. Each year, a team of students from the Republic is formed to participate in the international Olympiad, based on the official proposal of the organizing committee of the country hosting the Science Olympiad and the number of participating students allocated for each country.

The Ministry of Public Education of the Republic conducted an analytical diagnosis every year. The activities of public education departments and other institutions were also evaluated based on the results of this analysis. According to the results of the Republican Science Olympiad in 2000, 6 students became students of higher education institutions without taking tests. A monitoring service was introduced in the educational sector, and monitoring rooms were operating in all public education departments and 78 percent of schools in the region. The academic performance of schoolchildren in the Kashkadarya region rose from 13th to 5th place in the Republic in the first ten years of independence. The region ranked second in terms of applicants' applications to educational institutions [6].

In 2001, 15,743 graduates of secondary schools in the Kashkadarya region applied to higher education institutions. Of these, 3,513 were admitted on the basis of state grants and contracts. This was 24 percent of school graduates [7]. However, the slow introduction of new pedagogical technologies into the educational process negatively affected the quality of education, and according to the results of admission to higher education institutions in 2001, not a single student from 81 schools in the region was able to enter [8].

Measures were also taken to attract school graduates to vocational colleges. For example, in the 2005-2006 academic year, 50,730 9th grade graduates from schools in Surkhandarya region were enrolled, and a "Festival of Professions" was held for them in secondary schools [9].

In the 2005-2006 academic year, the pilot testing of the new edition of the State Educational Standards for General Secondary Education and the modernized curricula continued, and a new method of assessing the level of knowledge of teachers in grades 1 and 7 was used based on a multi-point rating system [10]. The publication of the Resolution of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-427 "On measures to expand the education of general education graduates in academic lyceums and vocational colleges" published on July 27, 2006, led to the implementation of certain measures in the Kashkadarya and Surkhandarya regions [11].

Conclusion

In recent years, Uzbekistan has been working to create a legal basis for reforms in the education system. Over the past three years, 157 secondary schools have been newly built in the country. In addition, schools for gifted children named after our great scholars - Mirzo Ulugbek, Muhammad Khorezm, creative schools named after Hamid Olimjon and Zulfiya, Erkin Vohidov, Abdulla Oripov, Ibrahim Yusupov, Ishakkhon Ibrat, Muhammad Yusuf, Halima Khudoyberdiyeva, "Temurbek School", Presidential Schools, private schools, etc. have been established, as well as new and modern educational institutions. Education in these types of schools is based on completely new standards.

In conclusion, it should be noted that as a result of independence, public education has embarked on a path of improvement in terms of content and meaning. New modern schools and kindergartens have been built, most of which have been renovated in accordance with current educational requirements. It has become especially important to closely connect schools with modern educational achievements of foreign countries and strengthen their material and technical base.

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