

The Emergence and Development of the Out-Of-School Education System: International Experience

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Abstract: This article explores the emergence and development of the out-of-school education system based on the experience of Uzbekistan and international practices. The structure and organization of Uzbekistan's out-of-school education system are comparatively analyzed in relation to global experiences.

Keywords: education, upbringing, world, structure, globalization, strategy, method, experience, analysis, out-of-school education.

INTRODUCTION

In the socio-political, economic, and cultural development processes of any state and society, the role of the education system remains vital and relevant. In countries with well-developed educational systems, progress is achieved not only in the economic sphere but also in cultural life, showcasing their potential on a global scale. In the contemporary world, where globalization is rapidly accelerating and ideological conflicts and contradictions arise between various nations, societies, and cultures, the issues of education and upbringing are becoming increasingly pressing.

As noted by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, Shavkat Mirziyoyev: *"The foundation of progress, the force that makes a nation great and a country powerful, is science, education, and upbringing. Today, the development and global competitiveness of any country depend, first and foremost, on the quality of its education and the advancement of science."* [Mirziyoyev, S, 2024]. From this perspective, countries pursuing the path of development place primary importance on the education system.

According to the 2024 Nobel Prize laureates in Economics, Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson, factors such as climate, natural resources, and geographical location are not the primary determinants of a country's rise, development, or decline. Instead, the presence of inclusive institutions—especially those related to education—plays a crucial role. Poor-quality education cannot make a nation strong, powerful, or prosperous, nor can it lift its people out of poverty.

In their view, "the low level of education in poor countries is caused by economic institutions that fail to motivate parents to educate their children and political institutions that neither support the

construction and funding of schools nor respond to the needs and aspirations of students and parents. As a result, the cost of poor education and the failure to establish an inclusive market is extremely high in such countries. Despite the presence of numerous potential Bill Gateses or even one or more Albert Einsteins in these nations, they may be forced to live in poverty, deprived of education, and engaged in work they do not desire, simply because the system does not provide opportunities for them to pursue meaningful careers" [Acemoglu, D. *et al.*, 2021].

In the modern world, the aspiration for education is intensifying. Today, several Asian countries considered among the world's most developed—such as China, India, Malaysia, and Singapore—have not only advanced their national economies but have also assumed significant roles in global politics through the development of their education systems. However, despite this progress, there remain numerous individuals across different continents who are deprived of adequate educational opportunities. For instance, during the 1990s, the global rate of primary education enrollment was critically low. In impoverished countries, over 140 million children did not attend school at all. In rural regions of the Middle East and North Africa, approximately 33% of children had no access to schooling. It was estimated that an additional annual investment of \$7 billion over a 10-year period was needed to provide primary education to 130 million children worldwide. At that time, nearly 250 million children were engaged in laborious work for survival [Toshturov, S, 2022].

According to UNESCO, 251 million children and youth worldwide are currently out of school. This includes 71 million of primary school age, 57 million of lower secondary school age, and 120

million of upper secondary school age. In the poorest countries, 33% of children do not attend school, compared to only 3% in the wealthiest nations. More than half of the world's out-of-school population is concentrated in Sub-Saharan Africa (51%), an increase from 32% in 2000. Since 2007, the global number of out-of-school boys has surpassed that of girls, with 129 million boys and 122 million girls currently not attending school [<https://education-estimates.org>].

Recognizing this global challenge, the United Nations included quality education as a core objective—Goal 2 in the *Millennium Declaration* (2000–2015) [United Nations] and Goal 4 in the *Sustainable Development Goals* (2015–2030) agenda [United Nations, 2015]. This affirms that education is not only a factor in individual development, but a foundational driver of societal, national, and global advancement.

Education systems across the globe vary widely in structure and scope, and they continue to diversify over time. Key types of education include early childhood education, school education, out-of-school education, secondary vocational and technical education, higher education, postgraduate education, and self-directed learning, among others. As noted, historical and socio-political developments have contributed to the expansion of educational types. For example, inclusive education was introduced toward the end of the 20th century, while the early 21st century witnessed the rise of distance (or online) education, especially intensified by the global COVID-19 pandemic, which transformed remote learning into a near-mainstream mode of instruction.

All forms of education are vital to personal growth and the ability to find one's place in life. In this regard, alongside formal school education, out-of-school education plays a particularly significant role. Out-of-school education refers to learning that takes an individualized or collective approach to enhancing a student's scientific, creative, and professional development, while also reinforcing the knowledge and skills acquired in school settings. It helps students cultivate their intellectual and practical abilities and prepares them to enter future professions and establish a meaningful presence in society.

Out-of-school education strengthens the academic and vocational skills learned in school, and may support students in gaining admission to higher

education institutions or pursuing career paths aligned with their interests. It is important to emphasize that both school and out-of-school education are equally significant in shaping a child's development. Given that a student spends approximately half of their time in school and the other half in extracurricular institutions, both spheres exert a comparable influence on the child's preparation for life.

For example, a student with an interest in sports may acquire basic theoretical and practical knowledge within the school environment. Outside of school, in specialized sports institutions, the student can further enhance these skills through structured training and peer interaction, eventually participating in competitions and developing expertise. Over time, this may evolve into a lifelong passion or even a source of income. Clearly, out-of-school education is not merely a complementary activity—it is a critical and urgent component of the educational ecosystem. In this sense, it can rightly be described as a “school beyond school.”

Out-of-school educational institutions offer environments that promote creativity, ensure personal autonomy, and foster the transformation of knowledge into skills by providing a conducive and supportive setting for learning and development [Pulatova, D, 2022].

It is evident that out-of-school educational institutions have their distinct significance and functional niche. These institutions are social, organizational, and instructional-methodological entities that operate with children and adolescents outside the framework of formal schooling. They function in close coordination with schools while taking into account the developmental characteristics of children. Out-of-school education institutions include children's and youth creativity palaces, centers, clubs, sports schools for youth and adolescents, schools of arts and music, various studios, libraries, wellness institutions, and similar facilities. These institutions operate year-round and are designed to meet the individual needs of children and adolescents, to organize their leisure and recreation.

Out-of-school educational institutions may be established by state authorities, public associations, or other legal and physical entities in cultural-aesthetic, scientific, technical, sports, and other fields. All students, from any grade of general secondary schools, can voluntarily

participate in additional educational activities beyond the core school curriculum. These include disciplines in arts, crafts, vocational skills, sports, and others. Education in out-of-school settings is offered in various forms such as clubs, studios, ensembles, groups, and similar formats [National Encyclopedia of Uzbekistan, 2003].

The emergence of out-of-school education institutions is directly tied to the appearance of formal schooling. Early examples of schools are found in ancient Eastern and Western civilizations such as Egypt, Mesopotamia, China, Central Asia, Greece, and Rome. The structure and content of education in these societies were diverse and unique. Initially, religious studies dominated the curricula, later complemented by secular subjects. Students in these ancient schools studied theology alongside disciplines such as linguistics, mathematics, astronomy, and medicine. Outside school hours, they gained practical knowledge in areas such as craftsmanship, agriculture, military science, and other applied fields through informal or auxiliary forms of education.

Notably, institutions like Plato's Academy and Aristotle's Lyceum were prominent centers of out-of-school education focused on philosophy, science, and politics. Similarly, in ancient Greece and Rome, physical education, sports, and military training conducted in gymnasiums served as key components of out-of-school education. In Rome, public forums and mass events were widespread and functioned as informal platforms for acquiring knowledge in politics, law, and oratory—effectively acting as spaces for out-of-school education.

During the medieval period in Western Europe, children of school age often acquired practical skills and crafts by apprenticing in various guilds depending on their families' economic conditions and personal preferences [Roth, J. *et al.*, 2023]. These apprenticeships typically lasted several years and emphasized hands-on skill development. In monastic settings, students supplemented their religious education by learning professions such as rhetoric and calligraphy during their free time.

In the 20th century, the establishment of youth and children's centers became a significant advancement in facilitating students' extracurricular development and meaningful use of their leisure time. These institutions offered a broad range of activities, including creative clubs, sports sessions, and arts programs. To reinforce

and extend knowledge acquired at school, specialized clubs in science, professions, and various sports were introduced. As cultural factors gained importance, summer camps were also organized to help children spend their free time effectively and productively. These camps provided opportunities for recreation while allowing children to acquire new skills in a relaxed environment.

Out-of-school education has a long and rich history of providing learning, leisure, and support services to children and adolescents outside regular school hours. These programs play a vital role in the lives of millions of students around the world by offering them environments conducive to participation in various activities and the acquisition of new skills.

The roots of modern out-of-school education can be traced back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when entrepreneurs recognized the need for structured extracurricular activities for urban children. These early programs focused on physical development, basic literacy, and social skills. Operated largely by private businesses or community organizations, participation in such programs was fee-based and dependent on parental support.

In the 1950s and 1960s, after-school programs rapidly expanded as educational reformers began to recognize the importance of supporting students beyond the classroom. These initiatives were frequently backed by municipal governments and non-profit organizations, with funding sourced from both public and private sectors.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the scope of out-of-school programs broadened to include academic support, arts and music education, and vocational training. These programs increasingly aimed to address the needs of students from underprivileged backgrounds who lacked access to such opportunities outside the formal school system [Vandell, D. L. *et al.*, 2015].

The term *out-of-school education* (also referred to as *out-of-school learning* or *after-school activities*) was formally conceptualized in 1987 by Professor Lauren Resnick, a psychologist at the University of Pittsburgh and then-President of the American Educational Research Association. She described it as encompassing learning experiences and educational engagements that occur outside the formal school environment [Darling-Hammond, L. *et al.*, 2022].

Various scholars have proposed differing theoretical approaches to out-of-school education. For example, Professor Anna Aizer of Brown University (USA) argues that the lack of adult supervision among school-age children can lead to antisocial behavior [Goldschmidt, P. *et al.*, 2007]. Similarly, Professors E. Bettinger (Stanford University), T. Hægeland (University of Oslo), and M. Rege (University of Stavanger, Norway) contend that the inability of schools to provide comprehensive education necessitates the development of out-of-school educational opportunities [18]. These programs not only enhance academic outcomes but also ensure proper adult supervision.

Moreover, according to Professors J. Roth, A. Sant, and J. Poyel of Brown and Michigan Universities, out-of-school education encompasses structured programs during the academic year aimed at further developing students' skills and knowledge after school hours. Although such programs vary widely across countries, they typically focus on homework assistance, social interaction, physical activity, vocational skill-building, and creative expression [Edmunds, D. R, 2022].

Professor D. Vandell of the University of California has noted that out-of-school education often results in organized engagement among students, while education scholar Linda Darling-Hammond emphasizes that these activities, including extracurricular programs, sports, community service, creative clubs, and summer camps, play a crucial role in student development. According to this body of research, out-of-school learning significantly improves both academic performance and socio-emotional outcomes.

The core objectives of out-of-school education include addressing learning deficiencies, fostering talent development, strengthening social cohesion, and creating opportunities for real-world experiential learning—ultimately increasing student interest in education. A study conducted by the **National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing (CRESST)** at the University of California, Los Angeles, confirmed that participation in out-of-school education enhances students' engagement with school and their interest in learning [Darling-Hammond, L, 2020].

Accordingly, out-of-school education is organized in various forms across countries worldwide. In

many countries, a significant portion of students participate in extracurricular classes, especially in mathematics and additional language learning. In countries that are members of the *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)*, 35% of students attend such lessons in science, 48% in mathematics, and 41% in foreign language learning. Among students who regularly attend science classes, approximately 38% also take extracurricular science lessons, and 48% of those who engage in regular math classes attend extracurricular mathematics programs as well.

On average, students in OECD countries participate in out-of-school lessons less frequently than those in partner countries and economies; however, there is substantial variation in attendance across countries. For example, in Greece and the OECD partner country Tunisia, at least 70% of students are enrolled in out-of-school science lessons. In contrast, in Austria, Japan, Iceland, Belgium, Ireland, and Australia, as well as partner countries such as Finland, Switzerland, New Zealand, Germany, Luxembourg, Spain, Croatia, and Argentina, students are generally not involved in such programs.

Regarding mathematics, more than 70% of students in Turkey, Korea, Greece, and the partner countries Qatar, Israel, and Tunisia participate in out-of-school mathematics lessons. Conversely, in Finland and Austria, at least 70% of students do not participate in such programs*.

In the area of extracurricular foreign language learning, at least 70% of students in Turkey, Denmark, and partner countries Kyrgyzstan and Tunisia are enrolled in additional language classes. Meanwhile, in Austria, Finland, Belgium, and Japan, at least 70% of students, and in Spain, Iceland, Switzerland, and partner countries

* The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) was established in 1948 based on the Marshall Plan to help rebuild the economy of Western Europe. As of 2023, the OECD has 38 member countries, including: Australia, Austria, Belgium, the United Kingdom, Hungary, Germany, Greece, Denmark, Israel, Ireland, Iceland, Spain, Italy, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Slovakia, Slovenia, the United States, Turkey, Finland, France, the Czech Republic, Chile, Switzerland, Sweden, Estonia, and Japan. Brazil, India, China, South Africa, and Indonesia hold the status of partner countries with the OECD.

Croatia, Liechtenstein, and Argentina, students typically do not attend these classes [Vandell, D. L. *et al.*, 2015].

In Norway, after-school programs are considered an integral part of the educational system and are aimed at further developing students' abilities after formal instruction. According to the Norwegian Minister of Education [Darling-Hammond, L. *et al.*, 2020], in the last decade, the implementation of out-of-school programs has played a vital role in fully integrating children from low-income or immigrant backgrounds into society.

After-school programs are also widespread across the United States today. However, based on U.S. laws, the structure of out-of-school education varies by state. For example, in Virginia, additional educational opportunities are offered to children from low- and middle-income families through various non-governmental organizations, supported by economic and educational programs [Goldschmidt, P. *et al.*, 2007]. In many cities, mentors, tutors, and teachers serve voluntarily in after-school programs. In Texas, such programs are coordinated by the state's special education agency and funded by local government. The U.S. Department of Education also supports these initiatives through community learning centers, especially in schools that lack sufficient resources [22].

In today's rapidly changing world, after-school programs continue to evolve to meet the unique needs of 21st-century learners. Increasingly, these programs focus on academic achievement, social and emotional well-being, and character development. In addition, they now offer a wide range of activities, including sports, technology, coding, and performing arts.

For example, in today's world, various online courses and educational platforms provide opportunities for millions of learners around the globe to gain knowledge and enhance their skills. Moreover, in the context of out-of-school education, the use of modern multimedia educational materials—particularly videos, audio recordings, and interactive content—has made learning more engaging and effective.

In turn, **distance learning** has also been integrated into out-of-school education. Students now participate in various online courses during their free time outside of school. The availability of modern technologies such as computers, smartphones, and tablets has significantly

expanded access to out-of-school learning opportunities.

CONCLUSION

Out-of-school education is one of the essential and timely components of the educational system. It plays a vital role in uncovering and developing students' intellectual and professional potential, as well as in helping them find their place in life in the future. For this reason, many countries around the world place significant emphasis on the development and support of out-of-school education systems.

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